THE FUNDAMENTAL TRIO OF
ARTICLES OF FAITH IN ISLAM

BELIEF IN THE ONENESS OF GOD
THE APOSTLESHIP
THE HEREAFTER

SYED ABUL HASAN ALI NADWI

TRANSLATION
IQBAL AHMAD

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Translator's Note

Religion is a subject that only God teaches to mankind. The last that He had taught us religion was just over fourteen centuries and thirty six years back, and He had concluded His Guidance with the verse: *This day have I perfected your religion for you, completed my favor upon you and have chosen for you Islam as your religion. [V.3,C.5; The Holy Quran].* THE FUNDAMENTAL TRIO OF ARTICLES OF FAITH IN ISLAM, BELIEF IN THE ONENESS OF GOD, THE APOSTLESHIP, THE HEREAFTER, is the English version of the title *Islam ke Teen Buniyadi 'Aqaed: Tawheed, Risaalat, Akhirat* by the Islamic Thinker, *Sheikh* Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, may Allah have mercy on him.

While I have made every effort to keep the meaning of the book as close as possible to its original expression, thanks are due to *Sheikh* Bilal Hasni Nadwi, the grandson of the illustrious author who has been kind enough to provide me the Urdu translations of Persian verses that were quoted in this book.

Heartfelt gratitude is due to my English teachers, especially, Mrs. F. Wasil, Mr. Christopher Das, Mr. Osman Siddiqui, posthumously the late Joseph C. Rodricks and the late Ray Robinson, and then to all those gentlemen from whom I benefitted and who obviously were better than me.

Today that this duty to God and service to humanity has reached completion it is because of an abundance of Allah's mercies upon me and the blessings of my parents. Their commitment, their sacrifices and unparalleled honesty have become very rare now a days. They inspire me like nothing else can. Their selfless love and encouragement, like some pain reliever, gives me the relief to stand up, again and again, against adversity. This and my previous works are a tribute to my parents, *My Lord! Bestow on them Thy Mercy even as they cherished me in childhood. [V.24,C.17; The Holy Quran].* May Allah the Exalted accept this humble effort of our two generations and guide my sons Mubashshir and Muhammad to perform better than us.

May Allah the Exalted cause the priceless benefit of this work of the great author to spread among the English readership everywhere.

Iqbal Ahmad Ibn Khalil Ahmad
MA, MBA [Alig]
Translator

Date: Zul Haj 20, 1436H; October 4, 2015
Place: Jeddah

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Publisher's Note for the English Edition 2015

Included among the objects of *Syed Ahmad Shaheed Academy* is that scattered writings of *Hazrath Maulana* Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, may Allah have mercy on him, be collected at one place and according to the subject in common among them, books be compiled and published. The title *Islam ke Teen Buniyaadi 'Aqaed: Tawheed, Risaalat, Aakhirat* [Urdu], published in 2004, was the first of this series whose subject is the *Articles of Islamic faith.*

It is a matter of great pleasure, personally for the writer of these lines and of special happiness for the English readership, that its English version *The Fundamental Trio of Articles of faith in Islam, Belief in the Oneness of God, the Apostleship, the Hereafter,* is now before you.

The work of translation has been done by respected *Janab* Iqbal *Sahab* who had earlier also translated two important books. The first was *Islam ka T'aaruf*, a book by *Hazrath Maulana* Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, may Allah have mercy on him, its English version published under the title of *A Short Presentation on Islam* became very popular. The second book *Jaada-e-Fikr-o-'Amal* is of my late father *Maulana* Syed Muhammad Al Hasni, may Allah have mercy on him; the translation of this book also that he did under the title of *The Line of Thought and Action* is very faithful. I am highly thankful to the abovementioned translator and pray to Allah the Exalted to keep him engaged in this endeavor and accept his works.

Syed Bilal Abdul Haie Hasni Nadwi

Syed Bilal Abdul Haie Hasni Nadwi

Place: Dar Al Arfaat,
Rae Bareily, U.P., India.
Date: Zul Haj 20, 1436H; October 4, 2015

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate the Merciful.

Publisher's Note of the Urdu Edition 2004

The history of religions and creeds tells us that, except for Islam, in all creeds there is more thrust and emphasis on apparent habits and rituals. However, Islam has kept the foundation of religion on articles of faith, it has bonded the apparent with the soul, it has laid stress on creating a harmony between the two and has made clear the fact that the biggest of the big deeds cannot be accepted by God the Exalted until it is consistent with the faith and belief that has been stated by *Sayyadna* Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.

Islamic etiquette requires that the mention of [a] a Prophet, the Archangel Gabriel, the Angel Michael and the Angel Israfeel or [b] the last of the Prophets or [c] his Companions be followed by a short supplication: for Prophets [and the said angels], *peace be upon him/them;* for the last of the Prophets *Sayyadna* Muhammad, *peace and blessings of Allah be upon him*; and for his Companions, *may Allah be pleased with him/her/them*. These supplications will be appearing throughout this book but ***peace and blessings of Allah be upon him***, is depicted by the following calligraphy of its Arabic ***Sal-lallahu 'alaihi-wasallam***:



On articles of Islamic faith, highly scholarly and intellectually convincing books have continually been written since the very beginning, among which *Al 'Aqeedah At-Tahaaviyah* has enjoyed great popularity throughout and it has been included in the curricula of educational and religious institutions. In the recent past *Hazrath* Shah Ismail Shaheed, may Allah have mercy on him, wrote a book under the title of *Taqviyat ul-Eeman* that drew a clear line of demarcation between belief and unbelief, *Sunnath* and *Bid'at* [the practice of the prophet ﷺ and innovation]. *Hazrath Maulana* Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, may Allah have

mercy on him, has translated it in very easy language under the title of *Risaalat ut-Tawheed* and has even added some very valuable marginal notes to it.

Since the very beginning, the family of *Hazrath Maulana*[a] Nadwi, may Allah have mercy on him, has had a special interest in *Tawheed* and *Sunnah* [Belief in the Oneness of God *and* Practices of the prophet ﷺ] and in this connection the family elders have always been very sensitive. Along with their occupation with Sufism, the strength with which the call inviting mankind to *Tawheed* and observance of the *Sunnah* has been raised from Daae'rah Shah 'Ilmullah, that is the family's prominent distinction.

Like his ancestors, *Hazrath Maulana* Nadwi, may Allah have mercy on him, also has clearly explained, here and there, in his speeches and writings the articles of Islamic faith in common parlance. In his Arabic work *Al 'Aqeedah wal 'ibadah was-Sulook* [Urdu version: *Dastoor-e-Hayath*] especially, the *Maulana* has concisely stated the articles of Islamic faith in easy language. Apart from this, in the beginning itself, *Hazrath Maulana* Nadwi had written detailed articles on Belief in the Oneness of God, Apostleship and the Hereafter, which were published in the periodical *Al Furqaan* [published from Lucknow] and some other magazines. The distinctive feature of these articles is that *Hazrath Maulana* has stated the need of faith to human psychology and then elaborated upon it. These were very beneficial articles and there was a great need that they were compiled and printed again so that collective benefit could be drawn from them.

It is a great felicity for the writer of these lines that this duty came in his lot. In all three subjects/sections of this compilation, necessary excerpts from *Hazrath Maulana's* other important works and speeches have also been included. In all humility I acknowledge having added headings and sub-headings here and there. Thus is this complete book before the readers.

Included among the objects of *Syed Ahmad Shaheed Academy* is that scattered writings of *Hazrath Maulana* be collected at one place and according to the

a. Although *Maulana* in Arabic means Our Patron, but in Urdu *Maulana* means a certified Islamic scholar, it neither means God nor implies divinity, and *Hazrath Maulana* is the Urdu equivalent of *Fazeelath ush-Sheikh.*

subject in common among them, books be compiled and published. The present book *Islam ke Teen Buniyaadi 'Aqaed: Tawheed, Risaalat, Aakhirat* [Urdu], is the first of this series whose subject is the *Articles of Islamic faith.* By virtue of priority and significance of the subject it is the better beginning, may Allah the Exalted cause this initiative to reach completion also in a respectable way, and make this series exceptionally beneficial, and reward all those who join us in this endeavor.

Syed Bilal Abdul Haie Hasni Nadwi

Syed Bilal Abdul Haie Hasni Nadwi

Place: Dar Al Arfaat,
Rae Bareily, U.P.

Date: Sha'baan Al Mo'azzam 9, 1425H

Foreword

All praise unto Allah, the Lord of the worlds, and may peace and blessings of Allah be upon the most distinguished of the apostles, his family and all his companions.

And then,[b]

Hazrath Maulana Syed Sulaiman Nadwi, may Allah have mercy on him, has stated that 'Antecedent to the correction of man's actions is his spiritual and intellectual correction, and if something rules the heart and intention of man then that is his faith.' The apostle of Allah ﷺ taught five articles of faith in clear-cut words, viz. belief in God, belief in the angels, belief in the apostles of God, belief in the revealed books of God, and belief in the Day of accountability of deeds and pronouncement of sentences.

Such are these five articles, that their mention appears in the Glorious Quran in various places. In *Surat un-Nisaa'* [Chapter 4] it has been stated in the following manner:

I seek refuge of Allah from Satan the outcast.
In the name of Allah the Compassionate the Merciful.

O Ye who believe! Believe in Allah and His messenger and the scripture which He hath sent to His messenger and the scripture which He hath sent before (him). Any who denieth Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers, and the day of Judgment, hath gone far, far astray. [c]

All these articles of faith have been stated in the Glorious Quran again and

b. Readers unfamiliar with Islamic civilization would like to know here that the Islamic etiquette of issuing public statements, written or spoken, is that the statement begins with extolling the praise of God and supplication for peace and blessings of Allah upon the beloved prophet. This is a standard pattern though words might vary. Only after these opening lines, in Arabic, that end with the phrase *And then!* follows the subject of the statement in any language whatsoever.
c. V.136, C.4, *An-Nisaa'*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; A. Yusuf Ali.

again, and apart from this, mention of other articles of faith that are universally accepted among *Ahl-e-Sunnath wa Jamaa'th* is found in the Glorious Quran and the Noble Traditions, like the religious law pertaining to *fate*, in the Glorious Quran it is mentioned in a different manner and then in the Noble Traditions it has explicitly and with great clarity been admitted among the articles of faith.

Out of these articles of faith, faith on *Tawheed* [belief in the Oneness of God], faith on the Hereafter and faith on Apostleship particularly have been mentioned with great frequency in the Glorious Quran. For this reason, the Glorious Quran has also been referred to as *Kitab ut-Tawheed* [The Book of belief in the Oneness of God]. *Hazrath Maulana* Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, may Allah have mercy on him, has written that, 'The clearest of the clear, the most explicit of the explicit and the strongest of the strong aspects about *Tawheed* that can be said to the point, it is present in the Glorious Quran.' After studying the Glorious Quran man can be everything but cannot be a polytheist.'

Similarly, the apostle of Allah ﷺ has laid endless emphasis on belief in the Hereafter. On the other hand, the larger part of the Makkan revelations[d] consists of its persuasion and preaching.

Belief in the apostle of God ﷺ has been considered necessary and in numerous places he ﷺ and his virtues and perfections are mentioned, because knowledge of Allah's commandments, His instructions and His Will comes through his ﷺ very agency. Along with this, belief on His books and angels too has been considered necessary.

In his unparalleled work *Seerat un-Nabi* [volume iv], *Hazrath Maulana* Syed Sulaiman Nadwi, may Allah have mercy on him, has put in black and white

d. Makkan Revelations are God's messages sent to the beloved prophet ﷺ through the Archangel Gabriel, peace be upon him, while he ﷺ was in Makkah.

an extremely scholarly and authoritative discussion on all these articles of faith.

Hazrath Maulana Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, may Allah have mercy on him, wrote on the subject of *Arkaan-e-Arbaa* [The four pillars of Islamic faith] and such a writing came into existence that every man of letters praised it and did so profusely. His intention was to write also on the first pillar of Islam on similar notes and he had also prepared its outline but this work could not reach completion. It occurred to those who were ever-obedient to him that *Hazrath Maulana* has, at different times, written something or the other on the articles of faith from a different perspective which is preserved in the files of various dailies and magazines, if those writings are compiled and published then that would not be devoid of benefit. My younger and very dear brother *Moulvi* Bilal, may Allah the Exalted bless and benefit him, deserves to be thanked by all of us that he considered this a felicity for himself, toiled, retrieved and collected the whole lot of these writings at one place. In this manner, on *Tawheed*, Hereafter and Apostleship, which are among the fundamental and most important ingredients of faith, several articles were found. These are now being published in the name of God. May Allah the Exalted accept this labor. In this corrupted and deteriorated atmosphere, may He make it a means to spread the belief in the Oneness of God, to establish the belief in the Oneness of God, and a means to understand the article of faith on Apostleship and to help men accept the beloved prophet *Sayyadna* Muhammad ﷺ as the prophet of the last era, and make him ﷺ an inseparable part of their belief. Amen.

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Common limitations of language

As we know, it is difficult to find exact equivalents of Arabic/Urdu words in English. The result is that occasionally an existing English word that is closest to the sense of an Arabic/Urdu word is employed, and it also finds widespread acceptance as an equivalent of that Arabic/Urdu word, however at times its original meaning happens to be entirely different. For meanings of English words I invariably refer to the Oxford Learner's Dictionary and take the cue from how celebrated translators of the Holy Quran have used certain equivalents. Three such words and their equivalents are worth explaining as they are the key words in this book, however as English equivalents in Islamic writings all three words are followed by, *peace be upon him*, as distinct from their usage elsewhere.

***Nabi* [Arabic/Urdu] – Prophet**: [in the Christian, Jewish and Muslim religions] a person sent by God to teach the people and give them messages from God.
Urdu sense: A person sent by God to teach the people and give them messages from God *but not only* Prophet Musa, Prophet E'isa, and Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon all of them. Other prophets are, Prophet Adam, Prophet Noah, Prophet Ibrahim, Prophet Ishaaq, Prophet Ismaeel, peace be upon all of them, and those who are mentioned by name in the Holy Quran.

***Rasool* [Arabic/Urdu] – Apostle**: Anyone of the twelve men that Christ, peace be upon him, chose to tell people about him and his teachings.
Urdu sense: A prophet who is also given a Revealed Book. The Holy Quran mentions four books as follows: The Holy Zaboor revealed to Prophet Da'ood [David], peace be upon him; the Holy Torait [Torah] revealed to Prophet Musa, peace be upon him; the Holy Injeel [Bible] revealed to Prophet E'isa [Jesus], peace be upon him; the Holy Quran revealed to Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.

***Paighambar* [Urdu] – Messenger**: A person who gives a message to somebody.
Urdu sense: One who brings God's commandment [though there are several meanings, including *Nabi* and *Rasool*]. Therefore, Urdu writers also, at times, use *Rasool* and *Paighambar* synonymously. However, translators find it difficult to use *Apostle* and *Messenger* synonymously, they use *Messenger* to refer to the angel who gives the message of God to a prophet and over *Rasool* they are divided. Since, the meaning of the word *Messenger* does not include the act of receiving the message which is central to the institution of *Risaalat* [Apostleship]; it appears inappropriate to some translators to use it as an equivalent of *Rasool*. Translators who use it for *Rasool* instead of the word 'Apostle' believe that Apostle has too specific a meaning already in Christianity – but then they are left with no English equivalent for *Risaalat*.

Translator

BELIEF IN THE ONENESS OF GOD

Introduction

The foremost distinction and prominent custom in the religion of Islam is its emphasis and stress on ‘faith’ and insistence to solve this religious matter first of all. Beginning from Prophet Adam, peace be upon him, up to the last of the prophets, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, all prophets, peace be upon them, continually invited people to and demanded their acceptance of a fixed faith [which they used to get through divine Revelations]. And opposite this task, they never agreed to any compromise or on quitting their work. In their opinion, he who leads the most excellent of the excellent moral lives, bears the loftiest of the lofty human characters, the living embodiment and role model of piety, rectitude, reasonableness and a moderate way of life – though he may have established some superior rule, created some righteous society and brought about some beneficial revolution even – does not have any worth and value until (a) he becomes a believer of the faith that they have brought and inviting people to which is the one and only purpose of their life, and (b) until he makes all these efforts and endeavors only on the basis of that faith. This is the very dividing line and a clear and fluorescent stripe that has been drawn between inviting people to faith by the noble prophets, peace be upon them, and heads of nations, political leaders, revolutionaries and every such person whose fountainhead of thought and vision, instead of the teachings and biographies of the noble prophets, happens to be something else.[1]

1. Among a lot of people fed up with the deteriorated circumstances of the present times a temperament has developed, that they forgive every disfigurement of faith and every crookedness and deviation of the thoughts and theories of every such person who raises a call for change or challenges some big power, and entirely overlook the question of faith. Rather, on the contrary, they make those people the butt of their ridicule and sometimes even accuse them of conspiring with dishonest powers who initiate a debate on faith at such a time and raise any question about the faith of that person. This line of thinking and course of action has no compatibility with the right religious temperament and the methodology of the prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.

The Glorious Quran which is safe from tampering and the only Revealed book to survive till the Day of Resurrection, and the Biography of the last of the prophets ﷺ – which is the lone biography among the biographies of the prophets that can be relied upon historically and scientifically, and from which it is possible to draw practical benefit in every time period – provide plenty of evidences and proofs in support of this truth and claim. Below we shall be content with only a few examples.

In this connection, the most prominent is that bountiful verse in which Allah the Exalted has specially praised the forbearance and kindness of His prophet and friend[2] *Sayyadna* Ibrahim, peace be upon him.

For Abraham was, without doubt,
forbearing [of faults], compassionate, and given to look to God.[3]

And has stated the conduct, life principle, temperament and taste of his companions and followers in the same vein:

Surely there hath been an excellent pattern for you in Ibrahim and those with him, when they said unto their people: verily we are quit of you and of that which ye worship beside Allah; we renounce you; and surely there hath appeared between us and you hostility and hatred for evermore until ye believe in Allah alone, – except the saying of Ibrahim unto his father: surely I shall beg forgiveness for thee[4]**, and I have no power with Allah for thee at all. Our Lord! In Thee we put our trust, and unto Thee we turn, and unto Thee is the journeying.**[5]

What can be a greater proof of the importance of faith and for it to be the criterion of union and separation that *Surat ul-Kaafiroon* [Chapter title:

2. A title bestowed upon Prophet Ibrahim, peace be upon him, by Allah the Exalted. **3.** V.75, C.11, *Hud*, Translation: Abdullah Yusuf Ali. **4.** Perhaps, some minds might get perplexed that why did Prophet Ibrahim, peace be upon him, promise to supplicate and ask forgiveness for his idol-worshipper father? Its answer is present in verses 113 and 114 of chapter 9, *Surat-ul-Bar'aat [Dissolve (treaty) obligations]*, of the Holy Quran: that he had fulfilled that promise but when he came to know that his father was an enemy of God, then he got sick of him and expressed the dissolution of that promise; and now this has been made the rule for all times to come. **5.** V.4, C.60, *Al Mumtahinah*; Daryabadi Quran Translation; A M Daryabadi.

Those who reject faith; The Holy Quran] was revealed at such a time in Makkah Al Mukarramah when circumstances were demanding politeness, kindness, that no enmity be created on the basis of worship and faith and this religious issue be kept in abeyance until Islam gains strength, and circumstances become normal and peaceful, but the Quran clearly and explicitly says and the apostle of Allah ﷺ openly proclaims:

In the name of Allah the Compassionate the Merciful.
Say: O ye that reject faith! I worship not that which ye worship.
Nor will ye worship that which I worship.
And I will not worship that which ye have been wont to worship;
Nor will ye worship that which I worship.
To you be your way and to me mine.[6]



6. Chapter 109, *Al Kaafiroon*; The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

Belief in the Oneness of God – A human need

The English word *belief* is not used here in the general sense of its dictionary meanings, it is used to convey the specific sense of the Urdu/Arabic word *Eemaan* i.e. belief in the articles of Islamic faith, specially the Oneness of God, Apostleship and the Hereafter, among others, *accompanied by righteous action which compliments and endorses that belief*.

Man is the embodiment of want, indigence incarnate and entirely a beggar's bowl! His needs inestimable and, as if, unlimited, his physical and spiritual demands and requirements beyond limits, and his nature is covetous and insatiable, that is why he cannot live on the support of any such being whose power and authority, whose generosity and the capacity to provide, whose information and awareness no matter how extensive it be, but has a limit.

In his nature, man is more fragile than glass and weaker than a bubble. For his existence and survival he depends on hundreds of things and in this world thousands of beings are his enemies. Only such a one can take care of him who exercises his sovereignty over the universe, in whose possession be the control of elements, and in whose grip be the physical and chemical properties of materials, he has to be both their creator as also the one who maintains an order and a discipline among them, and also has the power to seize them and transform them. Never in the hand of his omnipotence should there be a tremor and in the leg of his rule be a slip and unease, because even a slight vibration and a minor slip and unease can destroy his glass foundry of the physical and spiritual, and cause this workshop of opposites and contrasts to collide and become topsy-turvy. His knowledge ought to be current and all-encompassing, he ought to be whole-time alert and awake; mistake, forgetfulness, negligence and even the drowsiness of sleep should never be able to come near him, because creations are innumerable and their needs limitless and countless, and so

concealed that they themselves do not know. A human being is more needy of upbringing and guardianship, and deserving of love and affection than an infant fed by his mother, he is in need of just this type of a being who would be more affectionate than a mother and father; but his affection has to have both mercy and wisdom in it because both are essential for man's training.

When it is learnt by contemplating upon this world of `the without and `the within [the physical and the spiritual] that such a being is none else except Allah, and an abundance of physical and spiritual indications and proofs guide us towards this truth, like He Himself says:

Soon will We show them Our signs
in the [furthest] regions [of the earth]
and in their own souls,
until it becomes manifest to them that this is the truth;
is it not enough that Thy Lord doth witness all things?[7]

Therefore, deserving of worship and servitude is only His Being.



7. V.53, chapter 41, *Ha Meem Sajdah*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

Illusion and carelessness

However, in this world, the mirage of illusionary profit and loss surges in such a way, that the human eye is deceived again and again and a human being presuming hundreds of helpless and powerless beings like himself to be beneficial and harmful, and potent and empowered, appoints them (as) his god and deity; and sometimes this spell does not break throughout one's life.

Man may eat and drink, waste time and his offspring may continue the family name, and sometimes, in a certain science may reach the stars and cross uncharted seas and deserts, yet may not recognize his Creator. What greater ignorance can there be than this? However, this precisely was going on in the world. Tens of millions of people did not know their Creator, knew their father, but who caused the birth of the father, then who caused the birth of his father? Then extend this further up to Prophet Adam, peace be upon him; under discussion is no family tree, but the question is: who caused our birth? Who created the universe? Who fashioned the earth and the skies? Who erected the mountains? Who grew these gardens, groves and orchards? And who provides livelihood? And good or bad who has written the fate? And who is the Owner of death and life? Today, suppose a person has not studied Hindi, people will say he is *anparh*, and if he has not studied Urdu then in the circle of Muslims he will be called *nakhwandah*, and has not studied Arabic in that case the Arabs will say he is *ummee*, is illiterate, but can there be any worse illiteracy than not knowing as to who has caused one to be born, because only He deserves to be worshipped. The world was totally unaware of Him. For this very reason, Allah the Exalted sent prophets, peace be upon them.

An absolutely supreme branch of knowledge

Of all the knowledge and highly specific information about the Unseen that has reached human beings through the agency of the noble prophets, peace and blessings of Allah be upon them, the most exalted, important and essential knowledge in it is regarding the Being, Attributes and Acts of God the Exalted. The fountainhead and source of this knowledge are only the prophets, peace be upon them, because the intermediaries and the media of this knowledge and even its primary information and experiences are beyond the reach of humankind. Here is altogether no foundation for analogy, no one is identical to and bears a resemblance to God, while free from every sort of resemblance and likeness, He is the Hallowed, the High and the Superior. He is farther than the farthest from every such notion, observation and feeling that a human being is familiar and attached with, and which he employs in a material and sensory world. Here mind and conjecture, and intelligence and sagacity too are of no avail because this is not a field where you can let loose the reins of intellect and employ flights of imagination. A poet has rightly said:

Aye bartar az qayaas o khayaal o gumaan o waham
Wa zaharcheh guftah em shaneedam wa khwandah em
Manzil tamaam gasht o bapabaan raseed 'umr
Maaham chinaan dar awwal wasf tu maandah em

O the Being! Beyond vision and thought,
conjecture and idea even;
all that we said and read and heard,
You're more Exalted than that even.

The worldly journey comes to end
and a lifetime has concluded,
but we still are far from describing
Your first Attribute even.

This branch of knowledge has been considered higher and superior to all others, because upon it only depends the eternal happiness and success of people, and it alone forms the foundation of faith, deeds, morals and civilization. Through it alone man becomes aware of his own reality, solves the riddle of the universe, and discovers the secret of life; through it alone he determines his status in this world and upon its basis only strengthens his relations with fellow human beings, decides about a system of life for himself and determines with full confidence, foresight and clarity that what all he would try to achieve.

For this very reason, in every nation and race, and every period and class, this branch of knowledge was accorded the most exalted status; and every human being who was cultured, sincere, purposeful and had a concern for the end, expressed deep interest and fascination for this knowledge; because unawareness about this branch of knowledge [whether it be conscious and intentional or unintentional and unintended] is the cause of such deprivation that no deprivation lies beyond it, and the reason of such destruction and ruin that there cannot be a destruction and ruin any greater.



The method of prophets
[peace be upon them]
for
Inviting mankind to *Tawheed*

To make the truth easy to understand and break the spell cast on the eyes of people, the prophets, peace and blessings of Allah be upon them, adopted two methodologies.

Methodology I

They stated the Attributes of Allah the Exalted with extreme clarity again and again, because for the poison of associating partners with God and *Ignorance*, no antidote is stronger than this. The real reason for association

Readers will like to be informed here that the Urdu word *Jaahiliyyat* [Arabic: *Jaahiliyyah*] means *ignorance.* However, *ignorance* is also used in Islamic writings for *The period before the advent of Islam in Arabia when people used to worship idols there*. This second meaning is mentioned in this book with a capital *I* i.e. *Ignorance* or *`the Age of Ignorance*. A detailed treatment of this subject follows in the subsequent pages.

of partners with God, *Ignorance*, alienation from God, the captivity of and preoccupation with beings other than God, is negligence or unawareness about recognizing God, His Attributes and Acts. For this very reason He says:

**No just estimate have they made of Allah,
such as is due to Him, on the Day of Judgment
the whole of the earth will be but His Handful, and
the heavens will be rolled up in His right hand; glory to Him!
High is He above the partners they attribute to Him!**[8]

Methodology II

They did not talk about Allah. They stated the bare reality and correct status of the whole lot of living beings and creations instead, so that, the

8. 67, chapter 39, *Az Zumar*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

veil of ignorance that covers the eyes is lifted and in the light of knowledge it is seen that what actually they are, and to what extent they can be beneficial and useful for anybody and for their own selves; and how far it is correct and intellectually acceptable to develop an affair of servitude and worship with them, expect benefit and harm, and the fulfillment of our desires from them, rely on their support and patronage, place confidence on their knowledge and information and count upon them in leading our lives?

In connection with the Attributes of Allah the Blessed and the Exalted, those august personalities voiced very canonical and revolutionary ideas with which the face of life and the orientation of mind and heart is changed; for example: He is *As-Samad*, that is to say, the entire universe and every atom of the world in its existence and all that relates to its existence, is dependent upon Him and He is certainly not dependent on anybody for anything. Apart from creation and birth, this entire workshop of the world itself He is running alone, and from the skies to the earth, His only is the Rule and His only is the Administration. **His are the creation and the Command.**[9] **He directs the affairs from the heavens to the earth**[10] and in this empire no one is His assistant and partner. **Say: Praise be to Allah, who begets no son, and has no partner in [His] dominion; nor [needs] He any to protect Him from humiliation; yea, magnify Him for His greatness and glory!**[11] **No [sort of] share have they [the gods that the polytheists worship] therein; nor is any one of them a helper to Allah.**[12] Only His is the empire limitless, the power infinite, the river of bounty boundless and the treasures inexhaustible. **But to Allah belong the treasures of the heavens and the earth.**[13] **Nay, both His hands are widely outstretched: He giveth [of His bounty] as He pleaseth**[14] **bestows [His] abundance without measure on whom He will.**[15] Therefore, He only can fill a man's sackful of cravings and He only can satisfy him. Only He has the knowledge of the manifest, the hidden and the concealments of the heart, only His is the Being Omniscient and All- Seeing; **Who sees [all things] both secret and open**[16] **and knows the treachery of the eyes, and all that the hearts of men conceal.**[17] Hence, reliance can be placed only upon His knowledge and information, and only He can know and only He can

9. V.54, Chapter 7, *Al A'raaf*. **10.** V.5, C.32, *As Sajdah*. **11.** V.111, C.17, *Al Israa'*. **12.** V.22, C.34, *As Sabaa*. **13.** V.7, C.63, *Al Munafiqoon*. **14.** V.64, C.5, *Al Maidah*. **15.** V.212, C.2, *Al Baqrah*. **16.** V.22, C.59, *Al Hashr*. **17.** V.19, C.40, *Al Mo'min*; Holy Quran; Translation: A Y Ali.

fulfill the hidden desires of the heart and the non-sensory needs of life. Only He protects man and His guards are deputed for the protection of man.

For him are angels in succession,
before him and behind him; they
guard him with Allah's command.[18]

Then, He is nearer than all near ones and closer than all kindred; He is nearer to man than his jugular vein, and closer to the dying than his attendants.

We are nearer to him than [his] jugular vein.[19]

But We are nearer to him than ye, and yet ye see not.[20]

He listens every person's supplication and entreaty at all times and everywhere; between Him and the slave there is no wall and restriction nor to petition before Him there is the need for any intercessor and recommendation. **When My servants ask thee concerning Me, I am indeed close [to them]; I listen to the prayer of every supplicant when he calleth on Me; let them also, with a will, listen to My call, and believe in Me; that they may walk in the right way.**[21] Then, His love and affection knows no bounds, the love of a mother and father is merely a wonder and small specimen of His Cherishing and Mercy.

Then, He is the eternally Alive and the Awake because He is supporting the earth and the sky and is holding in His hand the reins of their administration, control and set-up. Accordingly, there is no negligence and forgetfulness at any time at His place.

God! There is no god but He – the Living, the Self-Sustaining, Eternal.
No slumber can seize Him nor sleep.[22]

As compared to the foregoing, in the creations of Allah they proved the

18. V.11, C.13, *Ar Ra'd*. **19.** V.16, Chapter 50, *Qaaf*. **20.** V.85, C.56, *Al Waq'iah*, **21.** V.186, chapter 2, *Al Baqrah*, **22.** V.255, C.2, *Al Baqrah*; The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

existence of all those characteristics that happen to be the opposite pair and the contrary of these Divine Attributes and whose sum-total is servitude, helplessness, weakness and humility.

Unto Him is the true call, and those whom they call upon beside Him answer them not at all, save as is answered one stretching out his palms to water that it may reach his mouth, while it will reach it not. And the supplication of the infidels only goeth astray.[23]

O men! Here is a parable set forth! Listen to it! Those on whom, ye call, cannot create [even] a fly, if they all met together for the purpose! And if the fly should snatch anything from them, they would have no power to release it from the fly. Feeble are those who petition and those whom they petition! No just estimate have they made of Allah; for Allah is He who is Strong and Able to carry out His Will.[24]

The parable of those who take protectors other than God is that of the spider, who builds [to itself] a house; but truly the flimsiest of houses is the spider's house; – if they but knew.[25]

Such is Allah, your Lord; His is the dominion; and those whom ye call on besides Him own not even the husk of a date-stone. If ye call unto them, they hear not your calling, and even if they heard, they could not answer you; on the Day of Judgment they will deny your associating; and none can declare unto thee the truth like Him who is Aware. O mankind! ye are needers unto Allah, and Allah! He is the Self-sufficient, the Praiseworthy.[26]

Yet they have taken, besides Him, gods that can create nothing but are themselves created; that have no control of hurt or good to themselves; nor can they control death nor life nor Resurrection.[27]

23. V.14, C.13, *Ar Ra'd*; Daryabadi Quran Translation, Abdul Majid Daryabadi **24.** V.73–74, C.22, *Al Haj*. **25.** V.41, C.29, *'Ankaboot*. The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali. **26.** V.13–15, C.35, *Faatir*. Daryabadi Quran Translation, Abdul Majid Daryabadi **27.** V.3, C.25, *Al Furqaan*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

Two classes of people

After these clear instructions and teachings of the noble prophets, peace be upon them, generally two classes came into existence among people.

[1] One class is that, which trusted those messengers of God upon whom Allah conferred the honor of prophet-hood and apostleship, to whom He granted the right knowledge about Himself and who He made a link between Himself and His creation for spreading awareness about His own Being, Attributes and Will in various matters, and to whom He granted such wealth of conviction more than which is impossible to imagine, gave them such light [of knowledge], any light more enlightening and reliable than which there cannot be.

And in this wise We showed unto Ibrahim the governance of the heavens and the earth, and that he might become of the convinced.[28]

One individual [*Sayyadna* Ibrahim, peace be upon him], from this very blessed league of prophets, had thus replied to his people when they were [without any knowledge and without any enlightenment] quibbling with him about the Being and Attributes of God the Exalted:

[Come] ye to dispute with me, about God, when He [Himself] hath guided me?[29]

Individuals of this class took the support of the noble prophets, peace be upon them, and in the light of the fundamental truths and tenets of faith that they had taught them, began the journey of contemplation and

28. V.75, chapter 6, *Al An'aam*, Translation of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali. **29.** V.80, chapter 6, Al *An'aam*, Daryabadi Quran Translation; Abdul Majid Daryabadi.

reflection upon the universe [i.e. in the sense of a set of experiences of a particular type] and their own souls, and deliberation over the Divine verses and the Revealed book; and with its help carried out their tasks of righteous deeds, purification of mind, and moral instruction on the right lines. They did not stop using their mind, all they did was after orienting the progress of those tasks on the right lines, they made it render such service that was meant to be its job and its real benefit. They observed that after taking these steps the teachings of the prophets and the results of their own contemplation and reflection are in complete concordance with each other, teachings attest the results and results verify the teachings and that their belief and conviction continue to increase in leaps and bounds.

And it only added to their faith and their zeal in obedience.[30]

[2] The second group is that which totally trusted and relied upon their own intellect and knowledge, gave their minds free rein and allowed the steeds of conjecture to gallop all around. In the study and enquiry about the Being and Attributes of Allah the Exalted they unreservedly employed estimations and analyses, like the way they do in researching some mineral fuel or some plant form in a chemical laboratory, and began issuing rash verdicts about Allah the Exalted, that *He is like this* and *He is not like this*. At their laboratories, in this connection, the frequency of *He is not like this* was very high in comparison to *He is like this.* And it is a fact that when man happens to be deprived of conviction and light, then *negation* becomes easier for him than *affirmation*. For this very reason conclusions of discussions and researches of Greek philosophers in metaphysics are mostly negative, and no faith, no religion and no system of life is established on negation.

Here is a unique and captivating point about the Bountiful Quran, towards which attention went for the first time through a sentence of *Sheikh-ul-Islam* Ibn Taimiyah, may Allah have mercy on him. He states, when Greek philosophers stated the Attributes of Allah the Exalted [Who they remembered, in their philosophical terminology, as *The Self-Existent* or *The Fountainhead of Bounty*] they went in greater detail and depth of those Attributes which, in their opinion, are not appropriate for Allah the Exalted

30. V.22, chapter 33, *Al Ahzaab*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

i.e. the *seized attributes* [He is not like this and is free from such-and-such aspect] and when *affirmed attributes* were mentioned [Allah is like this and this is His Attribute] then in that they employed *gist*. Thus the statement of the *seized* in philosophy is detailed and the statement of *universally accepted* is found abridged, which is contrary to the style of the Bountiful Quran in which there is detail of *the universally accepted* and abridgement of *the seized.* In other revealed religions and teachings of the noble prophets, peace be upon them, this same common characteristic will be found, *affirmation: detailed* and *negation: abridged.*[31]

Please read an affirmative statement of the Attributes of Allah the Exalted in these verses of the Bountiful Quran:

He is Allah, there is no God but He; Knower of the unseen and the seen.
He is the Compassionate, the Merciful.[32]

Allah is He, than Whom there is no other god,
the Sovereign, the Holy One, the Source of Peace [and Perfection],
the Guardian of faith, the Preserver of Safety, the Exalted in Might,
the Irresistible, the Supreme.
Glory to Allah! [High is He] above the partners they attribute to Him!

He is Allah,
the Creator, the Evolver, the Bestower of Forms [or colors];
To Him belong the Most Beautiful Names,
whatsoever is in the heavens and on earth,
doth declare His Praises and Glory;
and He is Exalted in Might, the Wise.[33]

And read the mention of a *Seized Attribute*:

There is nothing whatever like unto Him,
and He is the One that Hears and Sees [all things].[34]

31. The Book of *An-Nabuvaat* by Sheikh-ul-Islam Ibn Taimiyah. [Para phrasal: Author's.] **32.** V.22, C.59, *Al Hashr;* Daryabadi Quran Translation, Abdul Majid Daryabadi. **33.** V.23-24, C.59, *Al Hashr;* **34.** V.11, C.42, *Al Ahzaab*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

Imam Ibn Taimiyah, may Allah have mercy on him, further stated that even if the number of *Seized Attributes* be in hundreds, their effect cannot be that which an *affirmative* statement produces. Imam Ibn Taimiyah has stated an absolute truth, reality is precisely this. This life of ours and the lives of the past generations bear witness that human life is established on the *affirmative*, not on the *negated*. In the life of human beings and their civilizations relation with the *negated* is very trivial.



The reality of *Tawheed* and *Shirk*
[Belief in the Oneness of God AND Association of partners with God]
and
the Polytheists of Arabia

Shirk (Arabic) *i* pronounced as in *ship*, not pronounced like the English word *Shirk*; meaning: Association of partners with God. However, many a time, Arabic words do not have exact equivalents in English. The complete sense and connotations of *Shirk* and a detailed treatment of this subject follows in the subsequent pages.

The foundation of servitude rests upon the correctness of [a] articles of faith and [b] belief [*Eemaan*]. In the tenets of whose faith be a gap and in belief be flaw, neither any of his worship qualifies for acceptance nor any of his deeds will be considered right; and whose faith is correct and belief is right, his minor deeds are sufficient. Therefore every person should make full efforts that his belief and faith be corrected and attainment of the right belief and the right faith and the satisfaction a person feels over it becomes the goal of his endeavor and the limit of his desire, and he should consider this task to be compulsory, whose purpose cannot be served by doing something else instead, and delay it not by even a single minute.[35]

By an in-depth study of the Holy Quran with a clear mind and the sentiment of quest for the truth, it has already come to light that those who rejected faith in the time of the apostle of Allah ﷺ did not deem their false gods to be the equals and peers of, and of the same status as, Allah who is the Alone and has no partners; instead they used to admit that those indeed are creations and His slaves. Their faith never was that their deities are not in any way inferior to God in Power and Strength, and that they and God are together in the same league. Its testimonies are present in the Glorious Quran here and there; and at this juncture to quote the following verses 84–89, from chapter 23, *Al Mu'minoon* [The Believers] will suffice:

35. SUGGESTED READING: *Taqviyat-ul-Eeman* (Urdu) by *Sheikh* Muhammad Ismail Shaheed, may Allah have mercy on him.

Say:
To whom belong the earth and all beings therein? [say] if you know!
They will say: To Allah! Say: Yet will ye not receive admonition?
Say: who is the Lord of the seven heavens and the Lord of the Throne
[of Glory] Supreme? They will say: [They belong] to Allah;
say: will ye not then be filled with awe?
Say: in whose Hands is the governance of all things
– Who protects [all] but is not protected [of any]? [Say] if ye know.
They will say: [It belongs] to Allah, say: then how are ye deluded?[36]

Their *Kufr* [infidelity] and *Shirk* [association of partners with God] was only that, they called out to their false gods, complained to them of injustice, made offerings to them and offered sacrifices in their names and considered them to be intercessors in the court of God, the removers of difficulties and accomplishers of their tasks. Therefore, every such individual who conducts the same affair with somebody as the infidels used to conduct with their false gods, then, although he may admit that that being is a creation and slave of God but as a polytheist between him and the greatest of the great idol worshippers of the *Age of Ignorance* there will be no difference.

Sheikh Shah Waliullah *Sahab,* may Allah have mercy on him, writes:

It should be known that there are four classes of belief in the Oneness of God [*Tawheed*].

1. That, one considers only God the Exalted to be the Self-Existent, hence the deduction that none else is self-existent.

2. That, one understands God alone to be the Creator of the Throne [of glory], the sky and the earth and all things that do not depend on others for their existence. [This precisely is called *Tawheed-e Raboobiyath* (Urdu) i.e. the Oneness of God in which His Attribute of being The Cherisher is the most prominent.]

These two classes are such that neither the revealed books considered it

36. Translation: Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

necessary to discuss them, and nor did the polytheists of Arabia, the Jews and the Christians disagreed about them or rejected them. On the contrary the Bountiful Quran specifically mentions[37] that both these classes, in their opinion, are among the universal truths.

3. That, one considers the management and administration of the sky and the earth and all that exists between them as being the exclusive act of God the Exalted. [This is termed *Tawheed-e-Uloohiyyat* (Urdu) i.e. the Oneness of God in which His Attribute of being The Divine, who alone deserves to be worshipped is the most prominent.]

4. The fourth class is that none else except Him be entertained as worthy of worship.

Both these classes, by virtue of their natural coherence assume the status of interlocking components and inseparable compliments of each other. The Tremendous Quran has built its discussion upon these very classes/types and has given a convincing and complete answer to the doubts and suspicions of those who reject faith.[38]

From this we come to know that the meaning of *Shirk* [association of partners with God] is not only to consider some entity as being similar in status and an equal of God, rather the reality of associating partners is that man devotes that particular deed, or conducts that particular affair with some entity, which God the Exalted has reserved for His own High and Exalted Being and which 'servitude' He has made customary of devotion to Himself, e.g. to prostrate before some entity, to offer sacrifice or make vows in the name of some entity, to ask help from some entity in misfortune and hardship, and consider that, that entity is omnipresent and watching everywhere, and has the power to usurp anything whatsoever in the universe; all these are things that definitely result in *Shirk* and man

37. God the Exalted says:

If thou wert to question them, 'who created the heavens and the earth? They would be sure to reply, 'they were created by (Him), the Exalted in Power, full of knowledge'. [Verse 9, Chapter 43, *Az Zukhruf*, The Meaning of the Holy Quran, Translation: Abdullah Yusuf Ali.]

38. *Hujjatullah Al Baalighah*, vol. 1, pages 59 – 60 abridged.

becomes a polytheist through them, even though his faith may be that, this human being, angel or jinn before whom he is prostrating or in whose name he is offering sacrifice, making vows and from whom he is asking for help, occupies too mean and low a place and position as compared to God, and even though he agrees that God is very much the Creator and this is His slave and creation. In this matter prophets, holy men, jinn and devils, ghosts and evil spirits are all equal; whosoever will deal with anyone of them in this manner will be adjudged a polytheist. And this is the very reason that those Jews and Christians who adopted a similar manner of exaggeration and hyperbole vis-à-vis their monks, priests and *purohits* as the polytheists did vis-à-vis their false gods, Allah the Exalted has remembered with the same characteristic traits with which He has remembered the idol-worshippers and polytheists. And over those people who exaggerate and have wandered away from the path of Truth He has expressed His anger and wrath, in the same manner, as He has over the exaggerating polytheists. Allah the Exalted says:

They have taken their priests and their monks
for their Lords besides God,
and also Maseeh son of Maryam;
whereas they were commanded not but to worship the One God:
no god is there but He.
Hallowed be He from that which they associate.[39]

39. V.31, chapter 9, *At Tawbah*, Daryabadi Quran Transation; Abdul Majid Daryabadi.

Places and acts of *Shirk* and Customs and traditions of *Ignorance*

After the preceding section that dealt with principles and was of a general nature, necessity is to pinpoint the roots of those weaknesses, that disease and disturbed condition which affects:

- The *ignorant,* the followers of prophets, and nations affected by external influences, and customs and traditions of *Ignorance* [definition: on page 9]

- Those people whose upbringing was done away from the right Islamic teachings, knowledge of the Book and the *Sunnah**, *invitations* to pure religion, and in an atmosphere deprived of the right Islamic teachings.

To pinpoint those weaknesses and conduct an accurate diagnosis and estimation of those diseases in the ailing body is necessary.

The knowledge all-embracing and all-encompassing, the intention independent, divorced and unlimited, and the authority and Omnipotence total are among the distinctive Attributes of God the Exalted; and to perform acts and signs of worship, like *Sajdah* [prostration] or *Ruku'* [the half upright posture in *Salah*] before some entity, to observe fasting in the name of and to seek the pleasure of some entity, to make especial arrangements and undertake exceptionally long and tiresome journeys to some place and conduct with it an affair that befits the *Baitullah* [The Holy Ka'bah in Makkah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia], and transport sacrificial animals over there, to make vows and wishes there, are acts of *shirk* and places where *shirk* is committed. Those ways and signs of reverence that happen to be expressions of servitude and utmost humility, exclusively relate to only God the Exalted; knowledge of the Unseen is only with God the Exalted and outside the orbit of human capacity. Impossible for any

* Quran and the practices of prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him

entity is to have, at all times, the knowledge of the secrets of hearts, thoughts and intentions. In the acceptance of recommendations and the appeasement and entertainment of important persons and men of influence and authority, an analogy should not be drawn between Allah the Exalted and the kings of this world, in every minor/major matter of this type [instead of them] one should turn towards God only. To administer the universe like monarchs of the world, and take help from courtiers and ministers and helpers does not suit the dignity of God. Any type of prostration, except for God is not permissible for any entity; rites and actions of Haj, places of expressing extreme respect, and all signs of love and laying down one's life in love are, in their orientation, tied exclusively with the *Baitullah* and the revered *Haram* [The Grand Mosque in Makkah that houses the *Baitullah*]. To earmark animals in the name of `the righteous and `the saintly, to venerate those animals, to present them as offering and through their sacrifice obtain nearness to the latter is forbidden. Extreme respect laced with humility and meekness is the right of only God the Exalted. Only Allah has the right over a sacrifice offered with sentiments of reverence and earning nearness. To have faith on zodiacal constellations in the universe and the effects of planets is *Shirk*, to trust the soothsayers, astrologers and those who tell about matters of the Unseen is infidelity [*Kufr*].

In the adoption of names also, Muslims should demonstrate trends of *Tawheed* and should avoid such words that create misunderstanding and might reflect some polytheistic belief. To swear by some entity except God is *Shirk*. To make vows in the name of some entity other than Allah is *forbidden*. Likewise to slaughter a sacrificial animal at such a site where some idol existed or some festival of the *Age of Ignorance* was celebrated, is *not permissible*. To go to extremes in expressing honor for the apostle of Allah ﷺ, and to copy the Christians in exaggeration and hyperbole that they employ for their own prophet, peace be upon him, and to pay respects to the pictures[40] and replicas of the saintly and the righteous, are acts that one should abstain from and take complete precaution against.

40. The Urdu word used here by the author is *Tasveeren* which includes the whole range of products of various art and photography techniques e.g. stills, movies, drawings, etchings and paintings of human forms.

The fundamental aim of prophet-hood and an important object of its conferment is the eradication of the global folly of *Shirk*

Dictionary does not have the word *prophet-hood*. Readers will like to note here that God's chosen messengers can be both angels and men. However, it is customary to refer to human messengers as prophets, and prophets who are also given a revealed book as apostles. While the institution of apostles [*Risaalat*] is referred to as apostleship, there is no specific word for the institution of prophets i.e. *Nabuvat*. Therefore, we have little option than to refer to *Nabuvat* as prophet-hood. It is a binary term that highly learned translators too have employed in the past.

Faith about Allah the Exalted, correctness of the mutual relationship between slave and the Master, and the call to serve only one Master are subjects that constitute – in every age and every atmosphere – the first *invitation* of the noble prophets, peace be upon them, and the first and most important purpose of the conferment of prophet-hood upon them.

Phrases like *Invitation to Islam* and *Invitation to Tawheed* or simply *Invitation* as mentioned above, frequently appear in Islamic writings. Readers will like to be informed that: Calling mankind to the unadulterated religion of Islam is customarily referred to as *Da'vath* [Urdu] or *Da'vah* [Arabic] i.e. *Invitation*. Extending an invitation, even in common social settings, is considered an honor for the invited. [The same work when conducted among Muslims is termed *Islaah* i.e. Reform].

Always, theirs has been the very same teaching, that only Allah has the power to cause profit and loss, and only He is the Worthy of worship, supplication, attention and sacrifice. In every age, they dealt a powerful blow to the prevalent and abounding idolatry of their times that was manifest in the form of the worship of idols and holy and righteous, dead and living, personalities. About those beings, the belief of the people of the *Age of Ignorance* was that Allah the Exalted has honored them with robes of respect, greatness and divinity, has also given them the authority to dispose of certain select matters and unconditionally accepts their recommendations about human beings; like an emperor sends a governor to every province and, except for a few major and important portfolios, delegates all the

responsibility of administering the province upon them only, so to approach them only and appease them only is beneficial and necessary.

Whosoever has even a nominal relation with the Quran [which includes the teachings of all the previous revealed books], he will definitely and obviously be knowing the fact, that to marshal forces against *Shirk* and idol-worship, to wage war against it, to try to eradicate it completely from the world, and to deliver people from its clutches forever, was the fundamental aim of prophet-hood. The actual object of sending prophets, the basis of their *invitation*, the limit of their endeavors, and the ultimate reality of their struggles was precisely this. This precisely was the axis and center of their *invitational* activities. The Quran sometimes concisely says about them:

Not an apostle did We send before thee
without this inspiration sent by Us to him:
that there is no god but I; therefore worship and serve Me.[40]

And sometimes in a detailed manner, it names the prophets, peace be upon them, one by one and tells us, that his *invitation* had commenced with just this *invitation* to *Tawheed* i.e. belief in the Oneness of God[41] and the first statement that they all had made was precisely this:

O my people! Worship God!
Ye have none other worthy of worship but Him.[42]

This same idol-worship and *Shirk* [That is, to appoint others as deities besides God and to express extreme humility and meekness before them, to prostrate before them, make supplications and ask for help from them, and make offerings to them and carry out self-imposed obligations for their

40. V.25, chapter 21, *Al Ambiyaa'*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali. **41.** In chapter 7, *Al A'raaf*, of the Holy Quran, after referring to each of the prophets, Prophet Noah, Prophet Hud, Prophet Saleh, Prophet Sho'aib, peace be upon them, by their names one by one, their work of inviting mankind to belief has been mentioned in the same words as above [please refer to sections 8 through 12 of chapter 7, *Al A'raaf* of the Holy Quran; also sections 3 through 8 of chapter 11, *Hud* of the Holy Quran.] **42.** V.59, chapter 7, *Al A'raaf*, Translation: Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, may Allah have mercy on him.

sake] is the worldwide, age old and diehard *Ignorance* which is not specific to any particular period, and it precisely is the most ancient and the most fatal disease of humankind, which even in spite of the passage of the whole lot of periods of human history, and the whole lot of changes and revolutions of civilization, way of life, economy and politics, keeps chasing the humankind, provokes the Honor of Allah and incites His Wrath, becomes an obstacle in the road of His slaves' spiritual, moral and civilizational progress, and after throwing them off from the high status accorded to humanity, tosses them face down in deep and formidable pits of abasement. Its refutation till the Day of Resurrection, is the fundamental component of religious *invitations* and reform movements and the eternal legacy of prophet-hood.

And he left it as a word to endure among those who came after him, that they may turn back [to God].[43]

It is not at all permissible that under the impact of new claims of *reform* and *invitation* and new needs of a period, the gravity of manifest *shirk* be reduced, and in the fundamental principles of *invitation and preaching* an incidental status be accorded to it – or – 'political loyalty' and the acceptance of some man-made system and law be placed in the same class as the worship of entities other than Allah; and one and the same commandment be applied to both – or – we presume that in the ancient *Age of Ignorance* [when human brain and knowledge, and civilization were in their infancy] *shirk* was a disease and disorder and an ugly and awkward face of ignorance typical of that age, which man can practice only in an undeveloped and uncivilized period, now its days are gone, man has made a lot of progress, now his intellectual deflection is revealed in ever new and developed forms only. This claim and line of thinking is contrary to observation and experience, as also to what is currently happening. Manifest *Shirk*, rather open idolatry publicly exists even today; and whole lot of nations, entire countries, to the extent that a lot of Muslims are entangled in manifest *shirk*; and the following announcement of the Quran is true even today:

And most of them believe not in God without associating [others as partners] with Him.[44]

43. V.28, C.43, *Az Zukhruf*; **44.** V.106, C.12, *Yusuf*; The Holy Quran; Translation: A. Y. Ali.

The fact is, that if somebody's faith deserved to be overlooked because all his life he boldly stood by the apostle of Allah ﷺ, in highly dangerous and fearful situations and he and his family showered their heart-felt love upon him ﷺ, then he was Abu Talib, the uncle of the apostle of Allah ﷺ. Biographers of the apostle of Allah ﷺ, without exception, write about him that he was shield and cordon for the apostle of Allah ﷺ and against the whole lot of his own tribe was the beloved apostle's ﷺ helper and assistant, friend and supporter. However, it is proved on the authority of narrations from *The Sahih* that at the time of Abu Talib's death when the apostle of Allah ﷺ went to see him whilst Abu Jahal and Abdullah bin Abi Umayyah too were sitting there, and said, 'O Uncle! You just say: 'None else is worthy of worship except Allah', I shall bear witness of this declaration before God the Exalted', immediately Abu Jahal and Ibn Abi Umayyah said together, 'Abu Talib! Will you get disaffected from the religion of Abdul Muttalib? At that moment Abu Talib breathed his last saying, '(I) am on the religion of Abdul Muttalib'. It appears in narrations from *The Sahih* that, *Sayyadna* Abbas, may Allah be pleased with him, said to the apostle of Allah ﷺ that, Abu Talib used to defend and support you and he felt greatly honor bound in his concern for you, because of which, he absolutely did not care about the assent and annoyance of people, so, will it benefit him? He ﷺ said: I found him amidst flames of Fire and pulled him out to ordinary Fire'.[45]

Similarly Imam Muslim has recorded on the authority of *Sayyedah* 'Aishah, may Allah be pleased with her, that she narrates: I said, O Messenger of Allah! In the days of *Ignorance*, Ibn Jad'aan used to show great kindness towards his blood relations, fed the indigent and the poor, so, will it be beneficial for him? He ﷺ said: No! He will not earn any benefit by it because he never said: O my Sustainer! Forgive my sins on the Day of Judgment.[46]

Yet more clear and explicit is another narration of *Sayyedah* 'Aishah Siddiqua, may Allah be pleased with her, in which she says that, the apostle of Allah ﷺ proceeded towards Badr and had reached a place called Hurratul-wibrah when a man arrived, whose courage and bravery were famous those days; the Companions [may Allah be pleased with them] became very happy to see him [that, with him in the army of Islam which consisted of only three

45 and **46.** Book of belief, Sahih Muslim, Imam Muslim.

hundred and thirteen individuals, there would be a respectable addition; at that time even one man was very valuable, what to say of a skilled soldier]. When he had come close to the Apostle of Allah ﷺ he submitted: I have come here so as to accompany you and share in the spoils. The apostle of Allah ﷺ said: Do you believe in Allah and His apostle? He said: No! The apostle of Allah ﷺ said: Go back, because I cannot take help from any polytheist. *Sayyedah* 'Aishah, may Allah be pleased with her, says that he walked some distance, so much so that when we were at a place called Shajrah, again he came to the apostle of Allah ﷺ and made the same previous submission. The beloved apostle ﷺ gave the same previous reply, said: Go [away] I do not take help from a polytheist. He went away. And arrived again upon reaching Baidaa'. The beloved apostle ﷺ then asked him, that: Do you accept to believe in Allah and His apostle? He said: Yes! That time the apostle of Allah ﷺ said: Then come along.[47]

Not only this.

Instead, *Shirk* is a sort of scorn and refusal to value the *invitation* of the noble prophets, peace be upon them, their striving and their holy endeavors – and tantamount to harboring doubt and suspicion about the eternal nature of Quran [which is the last and eternal book of Guidance] and synonymous with skepticism about belief on its tenets and the ranks of that belief – as the course of action of the noble prophets, peace be upon them, only is the best course of action, which Allah has approved and there is such a decision and affair of success and achievement, acceptance and blessing, and God's support and guidance to act according to His Holy Will associated with it, which is not the case with any other reform methodology.

47. Book of the supreme effort in defense of faith and spiritual satisfaction, Sahih Muslim; Imam Muslim.

Invitation of mankind to *Tawheed*: [Belief in the Oneness of God] The work and its demands

The real work of prophets [peace be upon them] and their successors is, that they create with Allah the closest and the strongest relation and attachment of His slaves.

And they [people of the Book] were commanded not but that they should worship Allah, keeping religion pure for Him, as upright men.[48]

There remains no veil and barrier between Allah and His slaves; attachment and friendship, affection and love, absorption and occupation, resolve and action, effort and striving, inclination and repentance, obedience and worship, entreaty and lamentation, whisper and hymn, fear and fondness, in short, all that concerns the heart and the brain gets oriented towards His very Being. This precisely happens to be the greatest object and pivot of the whole lot of endeavors made by the prophets, peace be upon them, and their incontrovertible caliphs; for this precisely is their *Jihad* [striving in the way of God], is their *Hijrath* [emigration for the sake of God], is their preaching and in this very path is their life and death.

Say: Truly, my prayer and my service of sacrifice, my life and death are [all] for God, the Cherisher of the worlds. No partner hath He: This I am commanded and I am the first of those who bow to His Will.[49]

And in meeting this objective among their group of Companions and followers, by the leave of Allah the Exalted, they become cent per cent successful. They liberate the minds and hearts from the preoccupation and obsession with deities other than Allah, and the beings from the rule and law of deities other than Allah. However, effects of Ignorance keep rebelling

48. V5, chapter 98, *Al Bayyinah*, Daryabadi Quran Translation; Abdul Majid Daryabadi. **49.** V.162-163, chapter 6, *Al An'aam,* The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Y. Ali.

against it from time to time and *Shirk* continues to flare-up within people between periods of suppression, so much so, that the plight of those who are their own descendants and are called their nation and followers becomes that which the Quran has thus stated:

And most of them believe not in God without associating [others as partners] with Him![50]

Gradually indifference towards Allah and attachment with deities other than Allah increases so much, that for all practical purposes such a state of mind is reached which the Quran has thus stated: **And of mankind are some that set up compeers unto Allah; they love them as with the love due to Allah.**[51]

Interest in deities other than Allah grows to such an extent that: **And when Allah alone is mentioned, then shrink with aversion the hearts of those who believe not in the Hereafter, and when those besides Him are mentioned, lo! they rejoice.**[52]

Then under this faith, all those deeds that are meant exclusively for Allah are performed in the name of deities other than Allah e.g. slaughter of sacrificial animals, offering, prostrations, supplication etc., and gradually life's relation with Allah is severed and it is tied with deities other than Allah. The orientation of the heart is changed, the purpose of the arrival of prophets is defeated and *Ignorance* overpowers Islam.*

* In V.3:C.5 of the Holy Quran, for the first time Allah gave a name to His religion: **This day have I perfected your religion for you, completed my favor upon you and have chosen for you *Islam* as your religion.** Before this, He had given names to His books but not to their subject [religion] that His prophets, peace be upon them, had taught to their respective nations. Although people had themselves coined the names Judaism and Christianity, but regardless of names, religion always taught a way of *submission to God*. In Arabic, the phrase *Submission to God* is denoted by one word i.e. *Islam* and by the same token followers of prophets, peace be upon them, were *Muslims* of their times. Even before Judaism, *Sayyadna* Yusuf, peace be upon him, uses the word *musliman*, **Take Thou my soul [at death] as *one submitting to Thy Will* [as a *Muslim*], and unite me with the righteous.** [V.101, C.12, *Yusuf*, the Holy Quran; Translation: A. Y. Ali.] It is in this wider sense and not as a proper noun that the author has used the word *Islam* above to refer to the teachings of all prophets, peace be upon them. **50.** V.106:C.12, *Yusuf*, Holy Quran; Translation: A. Y. Ali. **51.** V.165:C.2, *Al Baqrah*, Holy Quran; Translation: A M Daryabadi. **52.** V.45, C.39, *Az Zumar*, the Holy Quran; Translation: A. Y. Ali.

The revivalists, reformers and scholars of Islam of every period made *Jihad* [strived in the way of Allah] against this state of affairs. The respected scholars of Islam are the heirs and successors of the prophets, peace and blessings of Allah be upon them – *Scholars [of Islam] are the heirs of prophets*[53] – their legacy and substitution will be authentic and perfect only when the purpose of their life and the focus of their efforts will be the same as was that of the noble prophets, peace be upon them. What is that purpose of life and that focus of effort and endeavor? In two words: *Iqaamat-e deen* [to establish religion] or in one word: *Tawheed* [belief in the Oneness of God].

In other words, to help human beings become, by their own choice and in practical terms, the 'slave' of Allah in the same sense that they are His slave inherently and involuntarily; to try to establish the rule and law of Allah over the beings of people and the lands they inhabit, like they are established on the earth and the skies.

Not an apostle did We send before thee without this inspiration sent by Us to him: that there is no god but I, therefore worship and serve Me.[54]

He it is Who hath sent His apostle with the guidance and the true religion, that He may make it triumph over all religion, even though averse may be associaters.[55]

NEEDS AND TO ENTREAT ALLAH FOR THEIR FULFILMENT: While fear of Allah, and to hope from Him are the entirely natural and normal results and essential adjuncts of this faith, supplication and succor, and humility [which is the reality of worship] are its inevitable manifestations.

In every period, this religion of Truth faces a few obstacles and hindrances, most of which fall under the following four categories, namely:

- The appointment of an entity other than Allah as deity.
- The appointment of an entity besides Allah as being, supernaturally,

53. Sahih Bukhari; Imam Bukhari. **54.** V.25, chapter 21, *Ambiyaa'*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; A. Yusuf Ali. **55.** V.9, chapter 61, *Saff*, Daryabadi Quran Translation; A.M. Daryabadi.

empowered to cause harm and
- to cause profit, and
- to accept that entity as having usurped the universe and having influence in it.

All of these four categories, jointly and severally, comprise *Shirk*.

Shirk is a regular creed and a complete rule, for it and for religion to establish simultaneously in any one body, heart and mind, territory on earth, is impossible. This creed of entities other than God, existing outside of body and soul, occupies as much space as is the minimum requirement for Allah's revealed religion.

Yet there are men who take [for worship] others besides God, as equal [with God]; they love them as they should love God.[56]

"[The polytheists said:] by God we were truly in an error manifest. When we held you as equals with the Lord of the worlds."[57]

Therefore, until all the roots of *Shirk* and its thinnest of the thin root fibers also are not uprooted from the ground, till that time, the seedling of Allah's revealed religion cannot be planted, because this seedling does not take root in any such type of land whose soil already has the root of some other tree or has some other seed in it. Its branches go sky high and this tree flowers and bears fruit only when its root is deep and strong.

Seest thou not how God sets forth a parable? A goodly word is like a goodly tree, whose root is firmly fixed, and its branches [reach] to the heavens – it brings forth its fruit at all times, by the leave of its Lord.[58]

This tree cannot grow under the shadow of some other tree. Wherever it will grow, it will be solitary by habit. Its normal development requires a limitless atmosphere.

Is it not to God that sincere devotion is due?[59]

56. V.65, chapter 2, *Al Baqrah*. **57.** V.97-98, chapter 26, *Sho'raa*. **58.** V.24-25, chapter 14, *Ibrahim*. **59.** V.3, chapter 39, *Zumar*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

Hence, for establishing Allah's revealed religion somewhere, people who happen to be familiar with its nature and temperament thoroughly clean and level the land. They minutely search for and remove the roots and root fibers of *Shirk* and *Ignorance*, pick up and throw away all their seeds one by one, and turn the soil totally upside down, no matter how long it takes them to do this work and how much inconvenience they may have to bear; and no matter if all they gain out of this exertion and this struggle of a lifetime, like Prophet Noah, peace be upon him, be no more than a few individuals; and no matter if like some prophets, peace be upon them, the store of their entire lifetime be a single human being. However, they feel contented with this result and happy over this success and never make haste in attaining the result.

Kufr i.e. refusal to believe in Allah's revealed religion and His *Shari'ah* [Divine law], this refusal is a revolt against His rule and a rebellion against His commandments, whatever be the manner and sign in which it finds expression.

It includes those people also who, out of all the commandments of Allah and the apostle ﷺ, do not accept a single commandment even after they come to know that it is a commandment of Allah and the apostle ﷺ or do not refuse verbally though but violate it deliberately. Such people, even if they be punctual in observing other commandments, are not outside this orbit [the orbit of *Kufr*], to the Jews Allah the Exalted says:

Then is it only a part of the Book
that ye believe in, and do ye reject the rest?
But what is the reward for those among
you who believe like this but disgrace in this life? And on the Day of Judgment, they will be consigned to the most grievous penalty.
For God is not unmindful of what ye do.[60]

Only through the admission of divinity and sovereignty of Allah is refused, by corollary, the divinity and sovereignty of the whole lot of claimants of divinity and sovereignty.

60. V.85, Chapter 2, *Al Baqrah*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

However, individuals who remain unwilling to flatly and clearly refuse the divinity and sovereignty of false gods or in other words, though they have turned their faces in the direction of the *Qiblah*[61] they are not quite able to turn their backs towards other deities also; opposite *Deen-i-Ilahi* [Divine religion] whatever the authority established in the world and opposite *Shari'ath-i-Ilahi* [Divine law] whatever are the laws enforced, they are not quite able to rebel against them, sometimes they also act upon them and take recourse to them in times of need; such individuals, in reality, did not enter the fold of Islam. For belief in Allah, unbelief in evil is necessary and Allah the Exalted has accorded it precedence over belief [*Eemaan*].

Whosoever rejects evil[62] and believes in God
hath grasped the most trustworthy hand-hold.[63]

That is why the Quran has not accepted the claims of belief of such persons who take recourse to laws of entities other than Allah, their representatives and their centers, and appoint them as their referees and arbitrators.

Hast thou not turned your vision to those who declare that they believe in
the revelations that have come to thee and to those before thee?
Their [real] wish is to resort together for judgment [in their disputes]
to the evil one[64], though they were ordered to reject him.
But Satan's wish is to lead them astray, far away [from the right].[65]

The odor of this *Kufr* did not leave those individuals also who, even after entering the purview of the term *Muslim*, could not rebel against *Ignorance* and could not become oblivious to the beliefs and customs of *Ignorance*, until now from whose hearts the hatred and abhorrence of those things did not go away and the scorn for those acts was not expelled that *Ignorance* considers bad, hates and scorns at, even though they happen to be *preferred* and *desirable* in Allah's revealed religion and are a favorite

61. '*Qiblah* [Arabic] is the direction in which a worshipper offers *Salah* (prayer). **62.** *Taaghoot*, is the Arabic word used here in the Quran and though translated to *evil*, its sense is more specific. ***Taghoot* is every such being, opposite God the Exalted, to whom absolute obedience is shown [Imam Raghib Asfahani]** whether he be a devil or man or ruler [like Pharoah]. **63.** V.256, C.2, *Al Baqrah*, Holy Quran; Translation: A.Y. Ali. **64.** Again the Quran uses the word *Taaghoot* here. **65.** V.60, C.4, *An Nisaa'*, Holy Quran; Translation: A. Y. Ali.

practice of the apostle of Allah ﷺ; similarly, until now the love and respect of those acts, morals, customs and habits has not abandoned their hearts that are considered endearing and respectable by the practitioners of *Ignorance*, even though they happen to be *unbecoming* and *contemptible* under Allah's *Shariah* [Divine laws]; similarly, a bigoted sense of honor and support of one's people has not abandoned their hearts; and their conduct is based on the popular and accepted rule of Arab *Ignorance* and, in fact, of every ignorance, that: *Support your brother in every condition, whether he be the oppressor or the oppressed.*

An issue more delicate is that, even after adopting Islam or in spite of being called Muslim, the standard of beauty and ugliness be the same as customarily prevails in *Ignorance*, the value of things be the same which *Ignorance* has fixed, the same life values and the same standards be considered prestigious that *Ignorance* accepts.

The proof of the health of Islam is that there ought to develop a hatred for *Kufr* and its entire atmosphere, all that relates to it, all its signs and characteristic features, and the idea of a return towards it and getting involved in it becomes troublesome for man; and the firmness of belief is that between performing the most trivial of the trivial acts of *Kufr* and death, he much prefers the latter. A Bukahri tradition says:

> Three qualities will exist in whosoever person he will feel the sweetness of belief, one is that Allah and His apostle ﷺ be dearer to him than everything apart from them, secondly, that he loves any other human being only for Allah's sake, thirdly, to enter *Kufr* be as much offensive for him as being thrown into Fire.[66]

The state of mind of the noble Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, was just this. They had developed for their own past [*The Age of Ignorance*] an intense hatred. In their sight, there was no bigger insult than *Ignorance*. When they made a mention of times prior to their acceptance of Islam, they did so with extreme embarrassment and detestation. Towards all issues of those times, acts and manners, unbelief and

66. This tradition meets the authenticity criteria of both Bukhari and Muslim.

sinfulness, and Allah's disobedience, they not only had a religious and intellectual but a natural aversion. Allah the Exalted states this aspect of their character in the following manner:

But God has endeared the faith to you
and has made it beautiful in your hearts
and He has made hateful to you
unbelief, wickedness and rebellion;[67]

One sign of *Ignorance* is that when a commandment that comes from Allah and the apostle ﷺ be proclaimed, at that time ancient customs and traditions, and ways and manners of fathers and forefathers be recalled, and in confronting Allah and the apostle ﷺ, olden times and old traditions be cited as proof.

When it is said to them: Follow what God hath revealed,
they say: 'Nay! We shall follow the ways of our fathers.'
What! Even though their fathers were void of wisdom and guidance?[68]

Nay! They say: 'We found our fathers following a certain religion,
and we do guide ourselves by their footsteps.'[69]

To go by the ways and manners of fathers and forefathers, and one's own desire and will, as against Allah's Commandment and Revelation, is the typical legacy of *Ignorance*.

They said: O Sho'aib! Does thy religion of prayer command thee
that we leave off the worship which our fathers practiced
or that we leave off doing what we like with our property?[70]

Hence, after stepping out of *Ignorance*, all those people did not enter Islam completely, who did not develop a detachment with everything else opposite Allah and who did not totally surrender their beings to Allah. This

66. This tradition meets the authenticity criteria of both Bukhari and Muslim. **67.** V.7, C.49, *Al Hujraat*. **68.** V.170, C.2, *Al Baqrah*, **69.** V.22, chapter 43, *Az Zukhruf*. **70.** V.87, chapter 11, *Hud,* the meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

total detachment and complete servitude is *the Islam* which was commanded to Prophet Ibrahim, peace be upon him, and was readily accepted by him,

Behold! His Lord said to him: "Bow (thy will to me)";
he said, "I bow (my will) to the Lord and Cherisher of the worlds."[71]

And which is commanded to all Muslims.

But your God is One God,
submit then your wills to Him (in Islam).[72]

If it is not so, then there exists, as if, a state of war with Allah. Hence this *total Islam* [total submission to God] Allah has at one place called *silm*, Arabic for *truce*, meaning, this is a truce with Allah.

Ya ayyuhal lazeena aamanu
O ye who believe!

ud khulu fis ***silm****-i-kaaffah*
enter into *Islam* whole-heartedly;

wa la tattabi-u-Khutuwaat-ish Shaitan
and follow not the footsteps of the evil one

innahu lakum 'aduvvum mubeen.
for he is to you an avowed enemy.[73]

Please remember that by *Ignorance* is not only implied life in Arabia before the conferment of prophet-hood on *Sayyadna* Muhammad ﷺ rather it is every such un-Islamic life and system whose source does not happen to be:

1. The Revelation and
2. prophet-hood and
3. *Kitab-i-Ilahi* [Allah's revealed book] and

71. V.131, chapter 2, *Al Baqrah*. **72.** V.34, chapter 22, *Al Haj.* **73.** V.208, chapter 2, *Al Baqrah*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

4. the practices of the noble prophets, peace be upon them; and
5. which does not conform to the religious rules and commandments for life in Islam.

Whether that be the *Jaahiliyah* of Arabia or Mazdaism of Iran or Brahmanism of India or the Civilization of Pharaohs of Egypt or the Tengrianism of Turkey or the present day Western civilization or the religious life of the Muslim nation and their anti-*Shariah* customs and habits, morals and etiquette, and inclinations and sentiments, whether they be ancient or modern, past or present.

Kufr is not the non-existence of something, it is rather a thing duly accepted as also proven. That is not the name of only the refusal of Allah's revealed religion, rather that is a religious and moral system and a regular creed, in which are also its own obligatory acts and necessary acts, as also things disapproved [though not unlawful] and things forbidden. For this reason, these two cannot fit in one place and a human being cannot be loyal to both at the same time.

The noble prophets, peace be upon them, uproot *Kufr* completely; they do not become liberal-minded to make peace with and accommodate *Kufr*. They are also highly skilled at recognizing *Kufr* and in this regard their eye has the ability to look very far into the future and pick up the minutest of details. Allah the Exalted blesses them with complete wisdom in this regard. Except for placing confidence on their God-given sagacity and vision there is no remedy. To guard religion is impossible without guarding the borders of *Kufr* and Islam that they have marked and their signs that they have fixed. A trifling complacency and toleration in it leaves the face of religion deformed to such an extent as the Jewish, Christian and the religions of India have been deformed.

Successors of the noble prophets, peace be upon them, too have the very same sagacity and determination as them. *Kufr* or the love for *Kufr* or its support, in whatever the garb and mask it might manifest itself and in whatever the mold that its soul might appear, they immediately sense it so accurately that they do not doubt what they have sensed and no expediency

obstructs them from opposing it. To *Kufr* they say:

Ba har rang-e ke khwaahi jaamah mi poshee
man andaaz-e-qadat raami shunaam

Whatever the shade and style of dress you wear,
I'll catch you by how tall you stand and the build ye have.

Short-sighted people of their age or the libertarian and the peace-loving who consider making the very distinction between the monastery and the sanctuary [Makkah], the Ka'bah and the temple [that houses an idol] to be *Kufr*, ridicule them and scornfully give them appellations like City Jurist, Inspector of preachers, and Divine Commandant. However, they continue doing their work with total calm and perseverance, and there is no doubt that these very people have defended the religion of the prophets, peace be upon them, in every period.

And today, that Islam is seen in a form superior to Judaism, Christianity and *Hindumat*, it is the result of precisely their courage, uprightness and mastery of Islamic jurisprudence.



Invitation of mankind to *Tawheed* [Belief in the Oneness of God] in India

In India, where Islam's foundation due to various historical reasons is weak since ever and which is the center and homeland of some of the major polytheistic religions and nations of the world, the pure spring of Islam had begun to get excessively turbid and it was feared that, this lively spring might dry up in this land of various sorts of darkness in such a way that even a tourist guide would not be able to find the trace of it.

Hazrath **Mujaddid Alf Thani, may Allah have mercy on him**

When Mujaddid Alf Thani, may Allah have mercy on him, began his journey of revival, at that time, strictly in accordance with the roadmap that prophets, peace be upon them, follow in discharging the duties of prophet-hood, he took the first step this very point forward. *Refusal to prostrate before Jehangir* is the shining title of the history of revival that he led. In his letters, employing extremely clear and comprehensive, measured and carefully chosen words he (1) wrote the explanation of *Tawheed*, stated arguments that support the Oneness of Allah the Exalted and the fact that He alone deserves to be worshipped, which are illustrations of the extent of access he had into mystic knowledge (2) refuted the customs and manifestations of *Shirk*; (3) strictly told his followers and devotees not to emulate those who reject faith and indulge in customs of *Ignorance* and polytheistic acts; because without this much the work of revival cannot begin at all, leave alone reach completion.

The gain and goal of the mystic way of life, and the object and desired in mysticism, especially, is nothing else except creating such an attachment and intimacy with Allah in which there would never come about any estrangement, such attendance in which there would never be a gap and

such attentiveness that would be effortless. This is not possible until the thought of benefit and harm, and power and authority associated with all things physical and spiritual does not come to naught, and the heart and the brain do not become completely independent of their love and greatness, and of having their fear and greed, and they no more in any sense remain: goal and desire, pleasant and favorite, revered and beloved and, in short, god and deity. This is the station of *Ikhlaas*, towards which the prophets, peace be upon them, and their successors guide. Mujaddid *Sahab*, may Allah have mercy on him, has, here and there, in his letters invited people towards it and has explained it with clarity:

My dear sir! After traversing the stages of mystic initiation and crossing the stations of sentiment, came to know that the purpose of this spiritual satisfaction and mysticism is the attainment of the station of *Ikhlaas* that is associated with the obliteration of physical and spiritual deities.[74]

In another letter he writes:

The root of spiritual illnesses and the heart of intellectual diseases is actually involvement and preoccupation with entities besides Allah, when freedom in totality is not forthcoming from this involvement, safety is impossible, because, in the court and presence of Allah the Glorified Monarch there is no provision for anyone to keep us company in any way. There is a verse of the Holy Quran: **Is it not to Allah that sincere devotion due?**[75] Leave alone that we make the companion our master. It is gross shamelessness that love for entities other than Allah be allowed to overwhelm us to such a degree, that the love for Allah the Exalted becomes naught or subdued beside it.[76]

A few wise parables on *Tawheed* [Belief in the Oneness of God]

Hazrath Sheikh Abdulqadir Jeelani, may Allah have mercy on him, who passed away in 561H – about whose saintliness and piety Muslims of all circles and interests, and the Muslim public in general are unanimous – has elucidated *Tawheed* through a very wise parable, and has sketched the folly

74. *Letters to Sheikh Muhammad Al Khairi*, no. 1/40. Translated from Persian by the author.
75. V.3, C.39, *Az Zumar*; The Holy Quran; A Y Ali. **76.** Translated from Persian by the author.

and stupidity of those people who take the help of entities other than Allah in order to get rid of misfortunes or to obtain some sort of benefit; he states:

Presume the entire creation to be such a man whose hands have been tied by the king of an extremely tremendous and extensive kingdom, whose rule is supreme, his dominance and strength is inconceivable, then that king has put a noose around that man's neck and has tied his legs also. After that, he has left him hanging from such a conifer by the bank of a river, whose waves powerful, width immense, depth immeasurable, and whose flow is extremely violent and fierce. After that, the king has seated himself on such a chair that is singularly magnificent and very high, so high that it is impossible to intend reaching up to it and to reach up to it. That king has kept by his side so huge a stockpile of arrows, lances, short spears and spears and other various types of weapons and equipment, that one cannot have an idea of its size. Now for a person who sees this scene, is it appropriate for him that instead of looking up to the king, instead of fearing him and placing his hopes in him, he fears that man suspended from a tree with a noose around his neck and pins his hopes on him? Whosoever acts this way, in the opinion of every intelligent being does he not deserve to be called unintelligent, mad and one of the cattle instead of the humankind?

Hazrath Sheikh Sharfuddin Yahya Muneeri, may Allah have mercy on him, while mentioning the Majesty and Greatness of Allah the Exalted and the total Authority and the Absolute Will He exercises over His creation – that, He does whatever He likes without caring anything about anybody; ensures compliance to His Will, nobody can dare ask Him anything; tongues speechless; mouths tight-lipped – writes in a letter to one of his students and describes this reality in such a way that the heart shudders and all over the body hair stands on end, he states:

'He does whatever He likes, He has absolutely no concern about anybody's destruction and Deliverance. Look how a thirsty human being rolls and tosses restlessly and dies, he says, 'beneath me streams are flowing and I am dying of thirst, not a drop of water is to be found'. A voice from the Unseen calls out to him and says, 'I bring thousands of truthful men to a dark and scary forest, and to a dry and desolate desert, and massacre them in order

to make their eyes and cheeks the feed of ravens and eagles. When somebody wants to speak, I seal his tongue and say to him, 'Let Him do as He Wills, nobody can question anything. These birds are also Mine and the truthful men are also Mine. Who [the silly] dares interfere? That he criticizes Our Act.'

Hazrath Mir Syed Ali Hamdani, may Allah have mercy on him

What was it that attracted *Hazrath* Mir Syed Ali Hamdani, all the way from Khatlan[77] to Kashmir? Was it the beauty of this beautiful valley that attracted him? Was it the towering peaks of the Himalayan range and the verdure of valleys that had attracted him? The region from where he came, that too was a beautiful region, it was laden with fruits and flowers. Then what is it that brought him here?

Shall I tell you what was it whose attraction brought him? That was a certain sense of honor. One who loves his Beloved more intensely, has more mystic knowledge about His Being and Attributes, has more conviction about His Perfections and the various aspects of His Beauty, so much more honor-bound he feels towards his Beloved. A lay man casts aside rubies and jewels like bricks and stones, breaks a costly diamond out of ignorance, but you watch the jeweler, how he lays down his heart for each and every flower that he crafts and does not like any scratch to appear on it; ask the nightingale about the rose; ask the moths about the candle; ask the lover about the beloved; and ask the messengers of God and those who know Him about *Tawheed*.

The fountainhead of *Tawheed* [Belief in the Oneness of God]

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was the greatest trustee of *Tawheed* and its greatest preacher and missionary, and mystic and connoisseur. Since centuries the wealth that he ﷺ had brought is being distributed and will continue to be

77. Khatlan is one of the three provinces of present day Tajikistan, in Central Asia; River Panj flows South of Khatlan.

distributed till the Day of Resurrection. By the Grace of God, that same wealth is also present in our lot and your lot. The blessed prophet ﷺ [may my soul be sacrificed for him!] was the one who knew Allah more than anybody else, who could recognize Allah more than anybody else, who loved Allah more than anybody else, who was the most willing to lay down his life for Allah's sake, accordingly, such was the condition of his sense of honor also that a person had only said: Whosoever will obey Allah and His apostle [peace and blessings of Allah be upon him] he shall attain guidance and whosoever will disobey both of them he shall go astray. The beloved prophet ﷺ could not tolerate this and the beloved prophet ﷺ could not bear to listen anymore, said: You are not good at talking, [do not say *both*] say like this: that whosoever will disobey Allah and His apostle he shall go astray.[78] Likewise, a person said, 'Provided Allah and you will, thence, this work shall be done'. The beloved prophet ﷺ said, 'You have made me God's equal!? . . . No . . . Provided Allah wills alone'.

This is the condition of the sense of honor! As much is the love of a true lover that much is his sense of honor. The sense of honor depends on love. The sense of honor depends on knowledge. The sense of honor depends on sincerity.

The sense of honor of *Hazrath* Mir Syed Ali Hamdani, may Allah have mercy on him

Hazrath Ameer-e-Kabeer[79] Mir Syed Ali Hamdani, sanctified be his soul, was a mystic very knowledgeable about Allah, was in every respect a holy man, was a lover of God, was a lover of His apostle ﷺ, was a pious personality, knew the temperament of religion and was a specialist at feeling its pulse. For this reason his sense of honor too about religion was such that the like of it does not exist in hundreds of thousands and tens of millions of human beings. He heard that Kashmir is a valley of vast length and breadth, people of that place are unaware about God. Over there, besides the Being of God, besides the Creator of the universe, besides the One who has no partners, many things

78. Chapter of etiquette, *Sunan*; Abu Da'ood. **79.** *Ameer-i-Kabeer* [meaning: The Great Commander] is a title of *Hazrath* Mir Syed Ali Hamdani, may Allah have mercy on him.

are being worshipped. Idols are worshipped, certain things are below the earth's surface, some are on the earth's surface, some are vertical, some are lateral. In whatsoever people saw a little strength, noticed the capacity to cause profit and loss, observed some special distinction, saw a little beauty and elegance, they readily bowed before that very being. My opinion is that if he had not come here, in that case, perhaps God and His apostle ﷺ would not have accused him of any wrongdoing, because starting from the place from where he lived up to this valley of Kashmir there were many major spiritual centers of religion, the whole of India was lying beyond the foothills of Himalayas, where thousands of Islamic scholars, hundreds of *madarsahs* and shrines were present; but men of great resolve do not see whether this duty is given to us alone or not? They come to regard that duty as their personal obligation. Let people stop them a thousand times, let anybody raise a thousand barriers in their path, let mountains stand in their way, let rivers traverse their path, they do not care for anything. There was, as if, a voice from the heavens that he had heard . . . 'Syed! Go to Kashmir and propagate *Tawheed* over there'.

Syed Ali Hamdani, may Allah have mercy on him, clearly perceived himself in the following situation:

I am accounting for my deeds before Allah, the Maidan of Resurrection is in front of me, the Divine Throne is present, in its shade of mercy the prophets, peace be upon them, and the pious are standing, and a question is posed from there, 'Syed Ali! You knew, that in a region of the earth created by Me, entities other than Allah are being worshipped, before entities other than Allah people are begging with hands outstretched and entreaties are being made, how did you tolerate it? This now was the scene before Mir Syed Ali Hamdani. If all the Islamic scholars and wise men of the world gathered and tried to make him understand that, 'Sir! You will not be questioned', but he would have said that, 'No, this question will be put to me only, my sense of honor cannot tolerate that even in a small territory on Allah's huge earth, entities besides Allah be worshipped, affairs of fear and hope be conducted with entities other than Allah; human beings [whether they be alive or dead] be considered capable of writing or spoiling fate, and believed to bless with offspring and grant livelihood, and known to be omnipresent and watching

everywhere. If I have come to know that on the North Pole or on the South Pole or atop a high and verdant peak of the Himalayas even one individual is such that he is worshipping an entity other than Allah, believes that an entity other than Allah is the beneficent and capable of causing distress, believes that an entity other than Allah rules over this universe, then it is my duty to reach and deliver Allah's message over there'.



His are the creation and the command

Remember, Allah says: **His are the creation and the command.**[80]

Solely His is the act of Creation and solely His is the act of wielding authority. It is not that, He has Created for sure, but somebody else is wielding authority, He has passively handed over His Sultanate to somebody else, that We have Created, you rule over it. He is very much the Creator also and the Manager and the Administrator also. It is not like Emperor Shahjahan commissioned the Taj Mahal, masons from Turkistan etc. were called in, craftsmen displayed their ingenuity, they came and went away, now upon the Taj Mahal whosoever likes may reign, govern, make it his palace, demolish, rebuild.

This world is not a Taj Mahal, this world is not a Qutub Minar[81], this world is not some archaeological museum; this world is created by God, the entire system is in His grasp, is in His Omnipotent Hand. Even a small workshop of this place He has not handed over to another being.

His Sovereignty [and knowledge]
overwhelms all the heavens and the earth.[82]

The Throne of His Dominion overwhelms the entire universe, overwhelms this whole planet. What to talk of this one solitary planet, the earth? All the planets, the entire Milky Way, the entire solar system, the entire celestial system, the entire lot of all this is in His very possession.[83]

80. V.54, C.54, *Al A'raaf*; The meaning of the Holy Quran; A.Y. Ali. **81.** A five storied tower located in Delhi, built between 1193 CE and 1368 CE by three rulers, namely, Qutubuddin Aibak, his successor Altamash and Feroze Shah Tughlak. **82.** V.133, C.2, *Al Baqrah*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; A.Y. Ali. **83.** How beautifully did the late Khwaja Altaf Hussain Hali say in his famous poem *Musaddas Hali* [The six-lined stanzas of Hali]. . . contd on next page

One example of this sense of honor is that, when the end approached *Sayyadna* Yaqoob [Jacob], peace be upon him, he called all members of his family, sons and grandsons and children of his daughters near him and said, O dears! O my loved ones! I will remain restless in my grave, unless you satisfy me that, whom will you offer your worship and devotion to after I leave this world? With unmistakable determination, those people said: please do not be anxious, we shall worship only Him Who you worship `the incontrovertible, and Who your forefathers Ibrahim, Ismail and Ishaaq, peace be upon them, worshipped: He is Alone and has no partners.

They said: We shall worship thy God and
the God of thy fathers – of Abraham, Ismail and Isaac –
the One [True] God: to Him we bow (in Islam).[84]

Dear father, dear grandfather, why are you asking us this question? What are you apprehensive about? Please rest assured, the way you have brought us up since our childhood and have sown the holy seed of *Tawheed*

83. Continued from previous page . . . .

Khirad aur adraak ranjoor hain waan
Mah o Mehr adna se mazdoor hain waan

Wisdom and sagacity are distressed over there
The moon and the sun are merely laborers over there

Jahandaar maghloob o maqhoor hain waan
Nabi aur Siddique majboor hain waan

The affluent are subdued and oppressed over there
The prophets and the truthful are helpless over there

Na parastish hai ruhbaan o ahbaar ki waan
Na parwaah hai abrar o ahraar ki waan

Neither is the worship of monks and Jewish priests over there
Nor is the care of who's holy and who's a freeman over there

84. V.133, chapter 2, *Al Baqrah*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

in the soft land of our heart, we cannot shift our stand from that. We shall certainly remain devoted to Him Who you worshipped `the incontrovertible, God the One, Who Abraham, Ismail and Isaac, peace be upon them, were devoted to. It was then that he felt satisfied and departed from the world pleased and happy. Men of tremendous piety that we have amongst us today, personalities who invite mankind to Islam, and our noble elders are the heirs and successors of such prophets only. The apprehension of Prophet Yaqoob, peace be upon him, was that, it should not be that my progeny gets trapped in the confusion of *shirk* the way that thousands of families and hundreds of nations have been trapped [after their founders and those who invited mankind to their unadulterated faith had passed away].

This is the very message, that every messenger of God brought with him, pious slaves of God proclaimed to the world, and reformers and revivalists conveyed to the people of every period, this is the very condition for victory and success, this is the very condition for honor and strength. Let us beg from Him only, fall in love with Him only. Allah the Exalted says:

Those who took the calf (for worship)
will indeed be overwhelmed with Wrath
from their Lord, and with shame in this life: thus do
We recompense those who invent [falsehoods].[85]

May be, people would have said that, when did we indulge in cow-worship? Heaven forbid a thousand times! How could we do such a stupid and evil deed? So, Allah gave the answer in this last Book of His and by saying **thus do We recompense those who invent [falsehoods]** included the whole lot of polytheistic faiths and acts in it; because a polytheist's foundation is always on fictitious tales and stories, and untrue and unauthentic ideas; and both of them are like twins, for this reason Allah the Exalted while mentioning *shirk* says:

But shun the abomination of idols and
shun the word that is false.[86]

85. V.152, chapter 7, *Al A'raaf*. **86.** V.30, chapter 22, *Al Haj*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

To *shirk* Allah the Exalted has clearly and emphatically given the epithet of *Iftara-i-'Azeem* [a slander most heinous] He says:

And whosoever associateth aught with Allah,
he hath of a surety fabricated a mighty sin.[87]



87. V.48, chapter 4, *An Nisaa'*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

The tenet of *Tawheed*
[Belief in the Oneness of God]
An international custom of Muslims

Tawheed is the international custom and insignia of the Muslim civilization, which will be conspicuously visible everywhere, starting from tenets of faith to activities and from acts of worship to ceremonies. The minarets of their mosques announce five times a day, that, None else except Allah is worthy of worship and servitude.[88] Their buildings and even their studio apartments, according to the rule in Islam, should be protected against idolatry and customs of *shirk*. Pictures[89], statues and idols are not permissible for them, so much so, that even in the choice of children's toys a regard for it is necessary. Whether they be the religious ceremonies or statewide celebrations, be they the birthdays of political leaders or the birth anniversaries of heads of religions or else the flag hoisting ceremony, to bow before pictures and statues, to stand before them with folded hands or to garland and wrap them with flowers, is prohibited for a Muslim and is against his monotheistic civilization; and wherever Muslims will be firm on their Islamic civilization and will be complying with it, they will refrain and keep themselves away from this act. In names, in ceremonies, in making vows, in reverence and respect for elders and in the tone and tenor of requests made to them, to transgress the limits of *Hijazian Tawheed*[90] and follow the ways and manners of some other nation is tantamount to deviation from Islam.

88. The *Azaan* (call for prayer) ends with the words: **Allah is the Greatest! Allah is the greatest! None else is worthy of worship except Allah!** **89.** The Urdu word used here by the author is *Tasaaveer* which includes the whole range of products of various art and photography techniques e.g. stills, movies, drawings, etchings and paintings of human and animal forms. **90.** *Tawheed* as originally taught in Hijaz [now the Makkah region in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia] by the beloved prophet, *Sayyadna* Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.

Tawheed: The fountainhead of strength

In short, whosoever's heart will be conversant with *Tawheed*, he will rely solely on the Being of Allah the Exalted, in distress will call Him only, in safety, security and prosperity will thank Him only, and will not keep a relation of entreaty, humility, servitude and the bowing of head in obeisance, with anybody else except Allah.

If there occurs a decrease in it, then there occurs a decrease in Allah's succor; and there are crystal clear indications in the Glorious Quran that in the *Tawheed* of whichever *Ummath*[91] a change came about; its strength changed. The biggest fountainhead and source of strength is the tenet of Belief in the Oneness of God. Allah the Exalted says:

Soon shall We cast terror in the hearts of unbelievers for, that they joined companions with God, for which He had sent no authority, their abode will be the Fire, and evil is the home of the wrong-doers![92]

And

Those who took the calf [for worship] will indeed be overwhelmed with Wrath from their Lord, and with shame in this life: thus do We recompense those who invent [falsehoods].[93]

91. The word *Ummath* has no equivalent in English. Two Urdu words *Ummath* and *Millath* are interchangeably used by writers. The difference between the two words, however, is of terms of reference. While *Millath* is used for a particular people *Ummath* is used in a more general sense. A *Millath* are followers of a particular prophet. However, the entire human population is classified in to two. A people who have accepted the Islamic faith: one *Ummath*. And a people who are invited to the Islamic faith: the second *Ummath*. **92.** V.151, C.3, *Aal-e Imran*; **93.** V.152, C.7, *Al A'raaf*; The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

Shirk is the cause of weakness, has always been and shall always be. **The practice [approved] of Allah amongst those of old that have passed away.**[94] Allah the Exalted has endowed materials with characteristic properties. Venom has a property, the antidote has a property. Water has a property, fire has a property. Likewise *shirk* has the property of weakness and *Tawheed* has the property of strength, fearlessness and being indomitable. For this very reason, the greatest necessity is that correction be made in the tenets of one's faith and a relation of *Tawheed* be secured with God in accordance with Ibrahimian, Muhammadan and Quranic teachings. Then that relation needs strengthening, because Satan always lies in wait, he always raids, and the thief goes to that very place where there is wealth. Whosoever has the wealth of *Tawheed*, of belief, he is in danger; I do not warn them of danger who do not altogether have this divine favor.

By dint of the intellectual effect that the tenet of *Tawheed* exercises on man, he begins to consider the entire world as being subordinate to a center and a system, and in its scattered elements begins to appear an open nexus and unity to him; and this way man can piece together a complete explanation of life, and the super-structure of his thought and action can be established on the foundation structures of:

(a) wisdom and vision
(b) cooperation on the bases of doing good and fear of God
(c) rectitude and success of humanity
(d) organization of society
(e) extending guidance to modern civilizations
(f) integration of the religious and the worldly, and
(g) the innate unity and brotherly ties of enemies and classes pitted against each other.

94. V.62, chapter 33, *Al Ahzaab*; The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

The unadulterated tenet of *Tawheed* [Belief in the Oneness of God]

There is a Builder of this workshop of nature, Who has been since ever, shall live forever. He is the Bearer of the whole lot of virtues, praiseworthy attributes and perfections, and free from all sorts of faults, defects and weaknesses. The whole lot of existences and the whole lot of information are in His Knowledge. This entire universe exists because of His very intention; He is the Alive, the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing; neither is anyone like Him nor He has any rival or equal; He is the Incomparable; He does not need any help. In the running and administration of the universe He has no partner, companion and helper. Only He deserves to be worshipped [i.e. respected in the extreme]. Only He is the One Who cures the sick, provides livelihood to creation and removes their sufferings.

To appoint entities besides God so as to worship them, to express extreme humility and indigence before them, to prostrate before them, to supplicate to them and ask for their help in matters that are out of human control and are only connected with God's Omnipotence [for example: to bless with offspring, to write fate: good or bad, to reach everywhere for providing help, to listen at every distance, to acquire knowledge of unexpressed ideas and things concealed] is, in Islamic terminology, called *shirk* and that is the most heinous sin which is not forgiven without repentance.

It has been said in the Glorious Quran that:

Verily, when He intends a thing, His Command is *Be* and it is![95]

Allah the Exalted neither descends in anyone's body nor does He impersonate anybody nor anybody happens to be His incarnate. He is not restricted in any place and direction. Whatever He likes happens, what He

95. Verse 82, chapter 36, *Yaseen*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

does not like does not happen. He is the Self-Sufficient and the Besought of all; not in need of anything. Nobody wields authority over Him. He cannot be questioned that what He is doing? Wisdom is His Attribute; every Act of His is wise and laced with goodness. There is no [Real] Ruler except Him. Fate, be it good or bad, is from Allah. He knows things slated to happen before they happen and grants to them a form and existence.



BELIEF IN THE APOSTLESHIP

Queries of human nature

The nature of a human being has a few questions that keep churning within him and rise from his depths intermittently. These questions neither can be evaded by lame excuses nor a blind eye can be turned to their answers. Who is running this universe? What are his attributes? What is the relationship that he has with us and we have with him? What does he like and what does he dislike? And that, what is the ultimate result of this life and the end or limit of this world? These questions are entirely normal and natural, and sound human nature has every right to ask a human being, that, who has built the world which he inhabits, and who is running it? Then, until he does not know the attributes of that builder he also cannot develop any heartfelt attachment and intellectual relation with him. The same is the case in this world, that until we do not have familiarity with the good qualities, morals and attributes of a person, we do not develop an attachment by merely knowing his name. Then if about the Creator of the universe we happen to know nothing except for the fact that He is present; and we happen to be uninformed of His Cherishing and Mercy, Power and Authority, Knowledge and Information, Love and Compassion, and other Attributes that relate to His Majesty and Beneficence, His relation of extreme closeness with us and our extreme need of Him, and the saga of our sojourn and survival upon His support, we cannot develop that attachment with Him which we should have with such a Being.

Similarly it is absolutely justified in its question, that from the inhabitants of the Earth in His Kingdom, what are the demands of the Owner of the Kingdom? Because, it is the first duty of the inhabitants of any dominion, to enquire about the system and the law of its Sovereign.

Similarly it is an absolutely natural thing if he also likes to know about this life, that at a certain point had begun life's return march, what is its place of

return and what will happen after that? Because this question relates not only to his future but also to his present. A person who comes to know that after this life there is a second life also, in which the previous life will be subjected to an audit and according to the deeds of that previous life he will be getting reward and punishment, the course of action of such a person in this life will be totally different from the person who apart from the present life, does not have any idea of any sort of a second life. Therefore, this question assumes a lot of importance in his present life also; and there is no room for delay in finding its answer because without settling this issue, this life cannot be organized on the right lines.

These are the basic questions of our life upon which depend our deliverance and felicity, and the decision of our destiny is put on hold. A slight mistake and slip-up in their answer can become the cause of our eternal destruction. We have got this life only for once and this is our most precious capital, and it cannot be whiled away merely in conjecture and guesswork, and trial and experiment.

Apart from these questions some more questions are also there, and they too relate to our everyday life. What is the relationship that we have with the world around us and it has with us? In this mighty uproar of life, what is our status and the purpose of our existence? Are we subordinates or free to decide? Responsible or irresponsible? If we are responsible, then before whom and our responsibility is to what extent? Are our strengths and abilities, our own or are they somebody else's property? What is the way to utilize them? What ultimate desire and the limit of vision is there of this life? And there are numerous questions like these, that naturally demand solutions and are the pivotal questions of life.

Two ways to answer the questions

There can only be two ways to answer these questions:

[1]

One is that we answer these questions ourselves on the basis of our personal knowledge, understanding and deliberation, but by this methodology the maximum that we can deduce will be, that there surely is some Builder of this world. As for the question that what His attributes are? Then that we cannot answer on the basis of our personal reflection. Even in its extremely sublime functioning our brain cannot go beyond the limits of conjecture, and this is a matter in which there is no room for conjecture, because there is no similarity at all between the Creator and the creation that after observing the manifest and perceptible things of the created world one can imagine the Attributes of the Creator.

After this, the second difficult question is to ascertain that what does He want from us? What does He like and what does He dislike? We see that it is difficult to form a definite opinion even about the taste, distaste and happiness, of friends, relatives and close peers and in this matter, at times, big mistakes are made. Then how is it possible to determine with certainty, merely on the basis of conjecture that which acts are in accordance with the Will and not in accordance with the Will of an Unseen Being, Who is at an inconceivable and incredible distance from us?

Then the result of this knowledge, understanding and deliberation is not one. The result suffers from serious contradiction and conflict. Somebody, on the basis of his deliberation, concluded that this workshop was built without a builder and is running without anybody running it and will end by itself; in somebody's opinion if there is a Creator then He has got no relation left with the creations; in somebody's opinion its Creator Himself was its Real Owner

but now He has relinquished His Ownership rights in favor of others and now in His Kingdom they are the reigning kings; somebody appointed everything of this world, which apparently benefited and harmed him or it potentially could, his god (deity) and everybody who was powerful his ruler, and his physical senses, everyday experience, intellect and understanding led him to this very conclusion; in somebody's opinion man is an evolved animal who has some needs and some wants, he is independent, free to decide and absolutely unaccountable, his strength is unconfined and his discretion unlimited, neither his law has any divine source, nor his knowledge has any Unseen fountainhead. The world is the uproar of a battlefield, in which the real law is might. Morals, good and evil, beauty and ugliness – all these are meaningless words.[1]

After accepting the existence of God, the guesswork and hair-splitting that the intellectuals and philosophers did regarding His Attributes and the way they related such imperfections towards Him which they do not like to relate towards themselves, that is among the weirdest produce of the human mind![2]

The subsequent set of questions, namely, what is the real stage and place of man in this world; determination of his status and purpose; determination of his conduct towards other creations and fellow human beings; subordination and freedom to act; the debate on responsibility and liberty; his opinion about his own strengths and apparent possessions; all of these, in fact, are a supplement of the first set of questions answering which correctly solves these automatically. People who erred in solving the primary set of questions and employed conjecture, in answering these questions also their getting involved in error and for contradiction and conflict, and suspicion and doubt, to appear in their conjectures was inevitable.

[2]

The other way to find the answers is that in this regard we rely on some

1. All these are quotes and beliefs of intellectuals and philosophers of the Ancient age of Ignorance, the Middle age of Ignorance and Modern Ignorance. For details please refer to literature on philosophy and metaphysics. **2.** Please refer to the quotes of Greek philosophers, Ibn Sina and Ibn Rushd.

other class of people, but the question is: which class? If it is the class of intellectuals, it can be asked that, in these issues what superiority do they possess over us and for the resolution of these metaphysical issues what sources of knowledge do they have? They acknowledge that in these issues neither the senses work nor does the mind play any role, they do not have access to even the rudiments of this knowledge. Then what right do they have to guide us in this regard and how can we rely on them? They can justifiably be told that:

> **Ah! Ye are those who fell to disputing [even] in matters of which ye had some knowledge! But why dispute ye in matters of which ye have no knowledge? It is Allah who knows, and ye who know not!**[3]

Now remains only this one scenario: that in these issues we trust a few such human beings whose knowledge in this regard may not be conjectural, instead it be definite and conclusive; who may have acquired the knowledge of these matters and truths by their own observation in such a manner, which is quite like the manner that we acquire knowledge of the audible and visible things of this world; for whom these things be as self-evident as various things of this world happen to be for us; who besides the common human senses have got an extra sense, which we can call *the sense of the Unseen*; who can enquire from God directly His Will and Commandments and convey them to other human beings. This is none other except the class of Prophets*. Their unblemished life, their fearless truthfulness, their superhuman wisdom and judgment, their miraculous teachings, create a conviction about the fact that these are a different kind of people and they are definitely in contact with that fountainhead of knowledge and information which is outside the reach of human beings. No cause can be ascribed to their supernatural attributes and matters in

3. V.66, Chapter 3, *Aal-e Imran*, The Meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali. *Readers will like to note here that God's chosen messengers can be both angels and men. However, it is customary to refer to human messengers as prophets, and prophets who are also revealed a book as apostles. While the institution of apostles [*Risaalat*] is referred to as apostleship, there is no specific word in English for the institution of prophets i.e. *Nabuvat*. Therefore, we have little option than to refer to *Nabuvat* as prophet-hood. It is a binary term that highly learned translators too have employed in the past.

their knowledge, except that their being prophets and the arrival of revelations[4] for them be accepted.

The aforementioned classes [the intellectuals and the philosophers], even themselves do not make claims of their knowledge being definite and conclusive, nor do they claim to have made any observation in this regard, the sum-total of their statements and propositions is just this much . . . probably He is like . . . OR . . . should be like . . . OR . . . constructs defined in the beginning of this discourse [which are not axiomatic and conclusive proof] lead us to the conclusion that . . . and what else can they say even?!!

However the claim of prophets, peace be upon them, is that their knowledge is definite and conclusive. Not only do they say that there is God and such-and-such are His Attributes, instead, together with this they also say that we listen to that which He says. We converse with Him. His messages arrive for us. His angels come to us. Before them nothing is as definite and self-evident as the Attributes of God, His commandments and messages and their own prophet-hood and apostleship. Accordingly, they do not even for a moment have any suspicion and vacillation in these truths and they remain headless to what somebody says to mislead or ridicule them.

An apostle stands on that high ground of prophet-hood and apostleship from where the same is the way he sees the Unseen world as the way he sees the present world; same is the way that the world of the Hereafter is before him, as the way that this world is. People who are not at that altitude and yet argue and dispute about his observations from the ground below, what can he say to them except that – my eyes can see that, which you cannot see, those sounds reach my ears which you cannot hear, you have got no solution

4. Revelation is the communication of God's messages to His prophets, peace be upon them, through one of the following ways: [1] An angel appears before a prophet, in his original form and conveys Allah's message to him and Allah causes the prophet to retain the entire message in his mind, however long it may be. [2] An angel appears before a prophet in the form of a man for conveying Allah's message to him. [3] God speaks to a prophet directly but from behind a veil e.g. distance and light which is too bright in which the human eye cannot see. [4] The prophet hears the sound of ringing bells and words are formed in that sound. [5] God conveys His message to a prophet in his dream; thus the dreams of prophets are the equivalent of Revelations.

except that whatever I say after seeing with my eyes and listening with my ears, you believe that, in precisely that lies your Deliverance.[5]

When a people got into dispute with their prophet[6] regarding God and His Attributes, he stated in extremely plain terms the difference between himself and those who argue without proof:

And when his people quibbled with him, he said: '[Come] ye to dispute with me, about God, when He [Himself] hath guided me?'[7]

Another prophet[8], stated the very same difference as follows:

He said, 'O my people! See ye if [it be that] I have a clear sign from my Lord, and that He hath sent Mercy unto me from His own presence, but that the mercy hath been obscured from your sight? Shall we compel you to accept it when ye are averse to it'.[9]

About yet another prophet[10] it was said that:

5. In his Safa Hill speech the beloved prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, had stated this same point which clarifies the difference between Prophet and non-Prophet in a very impressive manner. Standing atop the Hill he, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, asked his people: Till this day how did you find me to be? Everybody said in one voice, we found you truthful and trustworthy. Then he, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, said that: Alright, if I say to you that behind this Hill an army lies in wait, that wants to attack you in case you are negligent, then, will you believe it to be true? People said that: we have no reason for not believing it. [Because we have past experience of your truthfulness, and you are standing at such a high place, from where you can see that which we cannot see.] After this admission, he, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, said that: I warn you that a grievous punishment from Allah is about to come. In this enlightening prophetic speech he, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, made clear these very two distinctions of a prophet: one, his incredible truthfulness and chaste life; second, his God-gifted prophetic vision and observation of the Unseen, which other people do not have and on which basis other people are left with no other option than to follow in his footsteps.

6. Prophet Ibrahim, peace be upon him. **7.** V.80, chapter 6, *Al- An'aam*, The Meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali. **8.** Prophet Hud, peace be upon him. **9.** V.28, chapter 11, *Hud*. The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

Nor does he say [aught] of [his own] desire.
It is no less than Inspiration sent down to him.[11]

Of this very observation about him it was said:

[His] sight never swerved, nor did it go wrong!
For truly did he see, of the signs of his Lord, the Greatest![12]

The [Prophet's mind and] heart in no way falsified that which he saw.
Will ye then dispute with him concerning what he saw?[13]

As against this conviction and observation, whatever is there, listen to the reality of that:

They follow nothing but conjecture and what their own souls desire!
Even though there has already come to them Guidance from their Lord![14]

And

But they have no knowledge therein. They follow nothing but conjecture, and conjecture avails nothing against Truth.[15]

10. *Sayyadna* Muhammd, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. **11.** V.3-4, chapter 53, *An-Najm* **12.** V.17-18, chapter 53, *An Najm*, **13.** V.11-12, chapter 53, *An Najm*, **14.** V.23, chapter 53, *An Najm*. **15.** V.28, chapter 53, *An Najm*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

To completely state the cause of life without the Revelation and vision of angels and men who bring us God's commandments: Impossible!

Apart from these metaphysical questions – without giving answers to which our life cannot be superior than animal life – even otherwise, without the light of Revelation and the clarity of the vision of messengers [angels and men who bring God's commandments], we cannot completely state a cause of our life and cannot discover the real center of the universe's system and that all-embracing and wise law that is operative in this world. By our own eyesight we will not be seeing this life as a unit, instead we will find a disorderly book whose stitching has come off, and whose pages are lying scattered, a few of its lines and some of its headings can be read if we look at them carefully, but the title of this book of universe, the abstract of this book, the intention and purpose of its Author, we cannot know without the vision of those angels and men.

Researches that intellectuals and physicists have conducted relating to the universe, the truths they have disclosed regarding life, the way they have harnessed physical forces through their knowledge and experimentation for mankind, and the way they founded regular streams of knowledge and created libraries on each and every aspect of the universe, and each and every angle of life, that undoubtedly is a feat of human knowledge. However, whatever all of this is, it is the fractions and parts of the primeval set of life and universe, among which there is no mutual connection nor is their center known. All these are subordinate to which system? Pursuant to which objective? What important aim do they serve? Intellectuals and physicists have no answer to these questions. Although from an educational standpoint these very questions are the more important for us and in practical terms also their importance is above everything else; because morality, courses of action and the basic point of view towards life depend on these very questions. Intellectuals and physicists had not commenced their journey of enquiry from the actual starting point

[Knowledge of the Creator], for this reason they will always remain lost in the horizons and will never be able to solve the puzzle of life.

Totally opposite to this, however, when we cast a look at the universe in the light of the Revelation and through the vision of an apostle, peace be upon him, it is seen as *one unit* and appears to be a higher unitary system among whose parts there is complete mutual coherence and relationship, all of these carry out the commands of a center, their motion and action is subordinate to a purpose, neither there is mutual clash among them nor they are self-centric. The world is an assembled and balanced machine, every component of which is useful in its own place and is aiding the other component, or it is a big factory in which hundreds of machines are working, every machine is fully inter-related with the other machine; and this whole machine or whole factory is in the hand of the Owner of all knowledge, the Owner of all authority and power, Who is running it under a law and system that He Himself has designed.



How Prophets look at things and their course of action, and how Researchers look at things and their course of action – The difference

A difference exists in how prophets look at the universe and their course of action and how intellectuals and researchers look at the universe and their course of action. Let us clarify it through an example. A group of scholars and researchers enters a city, one of their teams explores that what are the coordinates of this city, where are its limits in each of the four directions, what is the length and breadth of its inhabited area? In its surroundings, how many rivers and how many mountains are there and where is the source of the rivers and up to where do the mountains extend? What is the area of the city? What all is grown there? This is a team of geographers. The other team finds out that since when has this city been in existence, what all archeological sites are found in the city, what is their history? This is the team of historians and archeologists.

Some people enquire into the structure of its land, conduct excavations and discover the minerals in it. This is a team of geologists.

Some people establish an observatory there; from where they study the stars and the planets, find out their distances from the earth, make forecasts regarding earthquakes and monsoons. This is a team of physicists and astronomers.

Some people establish a pharmacology laboratory, where they test the properties of medicines, analyze ingredients separately and in combinations, and thus conduct ever new researches. They are experts of chemistry and botany.

Some people conduct research connected with the language of the city, study its literature, compile its dictionary and define the rules of its syntax. This is the class of grammarians and men of letters.

Some people with a literary taste, in a shift from these dry topics, pay attention to aesthetics, relish the sight of flowers, leaves and natural sceneries, and relate their impressions about them in effective and beautiful verse. This is the group of poets.

Some people study the habits and customs, and manners of that place; and prepare a critical appreciation on them. They search for clues that from where have these customs found their way among them, how did they originate, out of these which are right and which call for reforms? These are scholars of sociology and ethics.

Some people present a few improvements for the city, they possess some recommendations for the organization and development of the city and for providing amenities to its residents. These are scholars of urban planning.

All these teams get busy in their respective jobs and in carrying out researches in their respective fields with interest and undivided attention.

Now, a man enters this city. He casts a thoughtful look over the entire city, he notices and listens to everything but does not engage himself in anything. In his opinion, important questions are not that what is the area of the city? What is its history? What minerals are found in the folds of its land? And those other matters that were of importance for the aforementioned teams. The first and the most important question before him happens to be, that who has built this city with such beauty and craftsmanship and inhabited it? Who rules here? Whose subjects are the inhabitants of the city? What relation and what sort of relation the Owner and the Ruler of the city has with the inhabitants of the city and its everyday life? He is appointed a medium between the Ruler and the ruled, becomes a spokesman for the government and an expert on its laws. Hence, all those specialist and research teams even if put together cannot become a substitute for that man. Without him, this whole city becomes nothing more than a museum and an amusement park.

The way the prophets look at things is basically unconnected with the way that intellectuals and researchers do. Their work is not research and to

discover the secrets and facts about living beings or non-living beings, their real subject is *the Being and Attributes of the Inventor and His Commandments.* Papers and pages of the book of universe lie open and scattered in the same manner before them also, as the manner in which they lie before other discerning people, but their eye does not falter or get entangled anywhere, they have a direct relationship with the Author of that book. They see in 'the horizons' and 'the sea of humanity' His clear signs; and such is the way they witness His dominion, that in this earth and the sky they notice only His Order being carried out, and see the manifestation of only His Sovereignty. His law they do not see being violated in any corner of the universe; His Order they do not find being ignored anywhere; the whole lot of peaks are seen paying obeisance to Him and the whole lot of powers are seen to be powerless before Him; in every matter it is very much His Invisible Hand that is seen to be working; by His very support do the earth and the sky seem to be staying in position, and that He happens to be the Self-Sustaining Supporter of the heavens and the earth becomes a certainty by sight for them.

This is the very Sovereignty of God which they see unveiled, whose awareness is a knowledge supreme and the Truth of all truths, with which the arts and sciences, of intellectuals and researchers, do not bear even an atom's ratio and as compared to which their reality is no more than childish details.

So also did We show Abraham the Power and the Law of the heavens and the earth, that he might [with understanding] have certitude.[16]

The nature of prophets, their mind and their heart is the best specimen of immunity [against evil] and quickness of comprehension. Characteristic of their healthy nature is that as soon as they reach the age of discretion they develop a true yearning and a genuine curiosity about the Creator and the Administrator of this world and their restless soul and their sad heart is not consoled until they find Him; their healthy nature creates in them aforetime

16. V.75, C.6, *Al An'aam*; The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

the conviction that somebody is the Creator and Lord of this world, and their Patron, definitely. They keep seeking Guidance from Him and search for Him with His very succor. Even during the actual search and quest they do not part from Him, and say:

Unless my Lord Guide me,
I shall surely be among those who go astray.[17]

The essence of their healthy mind is that to them every worldly sign appears temporary and every springtime, mortal. To them the stars, the moon and the sun all appear bound to set, on the decline, defeated. They never take anyone of them for being eternal, everlasting, perpetual and devoid of an autumn.

The distinctive quality of their whole heart is that they do not consider entities 'that set' to be worthy of their love and affection and do not like to fall in love with them; upon seeing them they uncontrollably cry out:

I love not those that set.[18]

They happen to be in search of a Living and Self-Subsisting Being, then once they find Him, at that moment they get impatient and proclaim aloud:

I am indeed free from your guilt of giving partners to Allah. For me, I have set my face, firmly and truly towards Him Who created the heavens and the earth, and never shall I give partners to Allah.[19]

This precisely is the sound heart in which there happens to be no room for anybody except Allah and which happens to be free of all impressions of greatness and grandeur about entities other than Allah. *Sayyadna* Ibrahim, peace be upon him, had this very healthy nature, the very same healthy mind and the very same healthy heart.

We bestowed aforetime on Abraham his rectitude of conduct

17. V.77, Chapter 6, *Al An'aam*; **18.** V.76, Chapter 6, *Al An'aam*; **19.** V.78-79, Chapter 6, *Al An'aam*; The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

and well were We acquainted with him.[20]

And verily of his[21] sect was Ibrahim.
Recall what time he came unto his Lord with a heart whole.
Recall what time he said unto his father and his people:
What is it that ye worship?
Is it a falsehood – god beside Allah – that ye desire?
what, then, is your opinion of the Lord of the worlds?[22]



20. V.51, C.21, *Al Ambiyaa'*; The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali. **21.** The sect of Prophet Noah, peace be upon him. **22.** V.83-87, chapter 21, *Al Ambiyaa'*, Daryabadi Quran Translation; Abdul Majid Daryabadi.

The distinction of the noble prophets
peace be upon them

Revelations arrive directly and only to the noble prophets [peace be upon them], they do not have any associate and partner in that life-giving knowledge without which human beings can neither achieve felicity nor can attain Deliverance. Knowledge, in whose light man learns about his own Creator and the Being who has granted existence to this universe, His exalted Attributes and the nature of the mutual relationship between Him and His slaves; in its very light is discovered the beginning and end of man, and is determined his place in this world and man's position before the Lord, and are pointed out [a] affairs and actions that earn the pleasure of Allah, incite His wrath, and make a man fortunate and successful or unsuccessful and unfortunate in the Hereafter [b] the rewards and punishments associated with the articles of faith, deeds, manners and habits of men [c] the important long-term consequences and the torment or reward given as a result of words spoken, deeds done and beliefs held by people. And this is the knowledge that we can call *`Ilm-un-Nijaath* i.e. the branch of knowledge that deals with Deliverance in the Hereafter.

The noble prophets, peace be upon them, in spite of having excellent and outstanding capabilities, sense of the subtle and the delicate, and gifted intelligence and quickness of comprehension, do not meddle in fields of knowledge that are in vogue and common in their day nor they have any claim of their excellence or their mastery in those arts and sciences. Instead, entirely removed from the whole lot of things, they only remain occupied with fulfilling that obligation and rendering that very service for which they have been sent, about which they have been authorized and upon which depends the felicity and misfortune of mankind. They remain whole-heartedly committed to conveying those very sciences to others.

The aftermath of indifference towards the teachings of prophets
peace be upon them

Civilized and developed nations who had, in their respective times, already reached the highest standards of civilization and culture, intellect and scientific inventions, even they were as needy of the teachings brought by the noble prophets [peace be upon them] and their specialized knowledge as the one drowning in a river stands in need of some boat to cling to, or a patient who has lost all hope of life is in need of an elixir. Individuals of those developed nations – however ahead they might have been in other fields of knowledge or way of living and civilization – in terms of this specialized and essential knowledge they were like suckling infants, illiterate through and through, poor and without capital; and despite their successes of science and advances of civilization when they dismissed this branch of knowledge and made fun of it, they invited ruin and destruction for themselves, their nation and society. Numerous developed and cultured nations who were replete with precious treasures of learning and literature, and who were cited as models of intellect and ingenuity have fallen prey to this refusal, arrogance, haughtiness, conceit and pride in their sciences and industries. The teachings that the prophet of their time had brought, they looked down upon with contempt and aversion, treated them with indifference, considered them useless and worthless; consequently, they became offerings at the altar of that very pride; and that folly which used to appear incredible intelligence and that narrow-mindedness which at that time was called foresight and pragmatism, drowned them; and they got a taste of their own doings.

A comparison between knowledge that prophets have
peace be upon them
and other sciences and skills

The stark contrast between the knowledge of the noble prophets [peace be upon them] and the sciences and arts of other scholars and intellectuals, is exposed entirely by a story. You people surely must have heard it, but perhaps, neither may have applied it on this difference nor may have noticed the eloquence of its wisdom; and please excuse me, this story is related to you people only, the student community.[22]

> THE TRUTHFUL NARRATOR SAYS THAT once a group of students went boating. Spirits were soaring, the morning was pleasant, the breeze was delightful and exhilarating, and there was nothing to do, how could these young students sit quietly, the illiterate boatman was a good means of enjoyment and extremely suitable for passing comments, humor and hilarity. So one sharp-witted young gentleman said to him: ‘Uncle, what subjects have you studied?’
>
> The boatman replied, ’Master! I am unlettered’.
>
> The young gentleman sighed and said, ‘Oh no! You didn’t study science?’
>
> The boatman said, ‘I have not even heard the name of that’.
>
> The second young gentleman said, ‘Then, geometry and algebra you must surely be knowing?’
>
> The boatman said, ‘Sir, these names are absolutely new to me.’

22. This section is an adaptation from a class room lecture of the author.

Now the third young gentleman started mischief, 'But you must have, by all means, studied geography and history?'

The boatman replied, 'Sir, whose names are these, city or man?'

Upon this reply of the boatman the boys could not suppress their laughter and they burst out laughing.

Then they asked, 'Uncle, what must be your age?' The boatman told them, 'Just about forty years.' The boys said, 'You wasted half of your life and didn't read and write anything.' The poor boatman could do nothing more than feel slighted, and receded into a long silence.

Look at the drama of nature! The boat had sailed only a short distance that the river was in flood, ferocious waves were closing in and the boat was being jolted, it seemed that it would sink any moment. This being the maiden boating experience for the boys, they were stunned and went pale with fear. Now came the illiterate boatman's turn. He pulled a long face and asked gravely, 'Dear brother, what all subjects have you studied?'

The boys could not understand what the guile-less illiterate boatman had meant, and began counting before him the long list of subjects that they had studied in college or *madrasah*. When the counting of weighty and frightening names was over, then he asked them, a mischievous smile on his face, 'It's OK you studied all this, agreed. But did you also learn swimming? If, God forbid, the boat overturns, then how would you be able to reach the shore?'

None of the boys knew how to swim. They replied with great remorse, 'Uncle! This is the only skill that we have missed out. We could not learn it.'

When he heard this answer from the boys, the boatman laughed loudly and said, 'Master! Although I lost half of my life, but you have drowned your entire lifetime, because nothing of your education will

be of any use today in this flood, only swimming can save your life today and about that you have got no idea.'

The condition of the whole lot of nations to cross the higher levels of development and to reach the high ground of civilization and urbanization, is just the same. No matter if they had been the encyclopedia of learning and literature or they had even led the world in the whole lot of humanities, philosophies and inventions, and discoveries of treasures hidden in this vast world, but they were unfamiliar with that knowledge through which man comes to know God, which can lead man to the Creator and with whose support it is possible to reach the destined shore and get deliverance from the flood, which maintains correctness of actions and inclinations, brings desires and lusts under control, makes the disposition righteous and civilizes the soul, stops it from evils and elates it on virtues, produces the awe and fear of Allah in the heart, and without which, neither society can be reformed nor civilization and urbanization can be preserved, which readies man to worry about the end and make preparations for the Hereafter, curbs the sentiments of egoism and selfishness, frees man from the lust and greed of the petty things of this world, shows the path of precaution and balance, and restrains from unproductive and inconsequential endeavors.

The wealth of knowledge lodged in the hearts of intellectuals and scientists and their huge and extensive libraries happen to be entirely devoid of that genre of information which the prophets receive from God. They do not have even the wind of those stages of the Hereafter, which the prophets inform of as eye-witnesses and pertaining to which they give detailed guidelines. All their running about is up to world limits; they cannot peep through and look across the border of death.

They know but the outer [things] in the life of this world; but of the Hereafter they are heedless.[23]

Still less can their knowledge comprehend the Hereafter, nay, they are in doubt and uncertainty thereabout; nay, they are blind thereunto![24]

23. V.7, chapter 30, *Ar-Room*; The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali. **24.** V.66, chapter 27, *An-Naml*; The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

The reality of intellectuals and scientists in comparison to those captains of the ship of humanity happens to be the same as that of children playing with beautiful oyster shells on the seashore before a veteran sailor. For those intellectuals and scientists also it is as much necessary, as it is necessary for an illiterate villager, that they sit respectfully like students before the prophets and acquire from them that knowledge of deliverance and felicity for themselves which cannot be learnt from anybody without them, without which the whole lot of their sciences and arts, the whole lot of their researches and discoveries are useless, rather a nuisance, for them. Pride and exultation over their own sciences and arts, contentment over their own information and findings, and doing away with the knowledge of prophets, is a death warrant for them as also for the whole lot of those populations and countries who accept their help or advices and handover their destinies to them. Individuals or nations who placed reliance on sciences that were current in their day and then treated the teachings and guidance of the prophets with indifference, they were destroyed.

For when their messengers came to them with clear signs,
they exulted in such knowledge [and skill] as they had;
but that very [Wrath] at which they were wont to scoff
hemmed them in.[25]

25. V.83, chapter 40, *Al Mo'min*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

After an apostle has been sent
peace be upon him
there remains no room for refusal

Even after the last of the Prophets ﷺ was sent, the same is the condition of every such nation that has crossed the higher levels of knowledge, wisdom, industry and urbanization; and its arrogance and pride, and its more than necessary confidence upon sciences, developments and its illustrious specialists did not permit it to adopt the practices of the Apostle of Allah ﷺ and follow in his ﷺ footsteps.

The same example, of the previous section, applies also to the developed nations of our times:

- Who can benefit from this religion which will last till the Day of Resurrection.

- And who can collect in their lot the rays of light emitting from this sun of innumerable lights.

Soon the result of the refusal, arrogance and indifference of these nations will become manifest, the stench from the corpse of their dying civilization will spread, and the structure of their urbanization will collapse to the ground.



Invitation of the prophets
peace be upon them

Phrases like *Invitation to Islam* and *Invitation to Tawheed [Belief in the Oneness of God]* or simply *Invitation* frequently appear in Islamic literature. Readers will like to be informed that, in Islamic terminology, propagation of religion is customarily referred to as *Da'vah* [Arabic] or *Da'vath* [Urdu] i.e. *Invitation*. Extending an invitation, even in common social settings, is considered an expression of respect for the invited.

Once the noble prophets, peace be upon them, have witnessed this truth with their eyes open:

[a] That this world has been Created by God,
[b] it is His very kingdom and
[c] by His very Command this whole system is running.

Then after that, they turn their attention towards human beings and watch with surprise that before Whom the universe and the whole lot of its components, willingly or unwillingly are bowing their head, and willingly or unwillingly Who they are obeying, man in spite of being a part of this universe's totality is hesitant in his desire and intention to bow before Him. Even though, unintentionally he is bowing before Him, is subject to His commandments and laws of creation, with His very Command he is born, with His very command he grows up, from child becomes an adult and from adult an old man, eats things that He only grows and rears, with His very command takes ill, with His very command regains his health, in short, in terms of all the necessities of life and in all his physical transitions he obeys God-made systems and laws in the very same way, as the inorganic matter and the plants and the animals do; but when it is said to him that the Power before Whom you are bowing unintentionally, intentionally also bow before that very Power, then he offers excuses. When the noble prophets, peace be upon them, saw this happening in total contrast to the first truth that they had observed, and they saw that many individuals of their human

brotherhood have bowed their head not before God, instead before some of His creations and have adopted their worship and obedience, at that time their spontaneous reaction was:

Seek they then other than the religion of Allah? Whereas unto Him hath submitted whosoever is in the heavens and the earth willingly or unwillingly, and unto Him shall they all be returned.[26]

The fall of the world is precisely this and the prostrations of the universe are precisely this, which has been abundantly described in the *verses of prostration** of the Holy Quran.

And to Allah doth prostrate all that is in the heavens and the earth, whether moving creatures or the angels: for none are arrogant [before their Lord]. They all fear their Lord, High above them, and they do all that they are commanded.[27]

*** [a]** It is obligatory for a Muslim to prostrate once, at the place where he is, after he reads or recites or hears *a verse of prostration* like the one immediately above; however, after *Fajr* prayer it should be postponed until about 20 minutes after sunrise and after *'Asr* prayer postponed until sunset, and he can also leave the place where he had read or heard the verse **[b]** if different verses of prostration are read or heard, at the same place, then one prostration becomes due for each, **[c]** and if the same verse is recited or heard once or more than once, at the same place, one prostration is enough. **[d]** However, if the place keeps shifting and the same verse is recited or heard every time at a new place, then the prostration becomes obligatory at every new place where he has heard the verse.

In short, the proposition to which the prophets, peace be upon them, invite mankind is that, man also should obey that very Power before Whom the entire universe is in prostration, lead life as such a component of the universe, which in its movement and action be in concordance with the latter's overall movement and speed, and subservient to the commandments and laws of the Creator of the universe, the Wise, who runs the affairs of the

26. V.83, C.3, *Aal-i Imran*; Daryabadi Quran Translation; Abdul Majid Daryabadi. **27.** V.49-50, C.16, *An Nahl*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

earth and the heavens. After abstaining from the whole lot of his improper desires, from power and despotism, from claims of independence and autonomy, and from over-weaning pride in his rights of ownership, he should totally surrender himself to Him. "Islam" is the name of precisely this and the whole lot of prophets, peace be upon them, had arrived with the task of inviting mankind to it.

Obviously, after this 'religion' and 'Islam' [absolute obedience and complete surrender] and with the view that ultimately He only is to be faced [**to Him shall they all be brought back**] and before Him an account of this lifetime is to be presented, there cannot by any means develop in man the sentiment of despotism and autonomy. The plan of his life will not emerge from the mold of his mindset, rather it will be proposed by Him only Who has prepared a master-plan for the universe and Who is also the Creator of man himself; his morals and habits, politics and convention, and orders and laws will not be authored by him, instead he will get all those from God.

As opposed to this path of Revelation and Apostleship, the other path is that man presume himself to be such a self-sufficient existence in this world, whose orientation of life is totally separate from other things of the universe and in which he is not under the rule of any higher authority, obedient to any revealed system and answerable in any non-human court of law. This is the path of *ignorance*. As a matter of fact, it is a rebellious bid to establish within this dominion of God numerous tiny, independent and autonomous dominions.

The Revelation-Apostleship combine is the foundation of civilization

The prophets, peace be upon them, grant to man those eternal sciences and truths, those absolute principles and rules of life, and those flawless codes of the way of life and community life, through whose strict observance rises the right human civilization and upon whose foundation develops a just and righteous format of civilization.

Civilization is not the name of brick and limestone, variety in paper and fabric, nor the name of fulfilling animal desires with human skill and mutual cooperation for it; civilization is the name of such a collective living in which limits established by nature are protected, every individual of its community gets his due share, and through contributions of beliefs and morality, and law and Government such an atmosphere is created in which man gets help in fulfilling the purpose of nature and reaching his Ultimate Object of life.

Straight away we see that without the light of Revelation and Apostleship, and the guidance of the prophets, peace be upon them, whenever man drew any blueprint of community life he could never perfect it and could not create that proportion and balance in it that is necessary for the development of a righteous human civilization.

The fact is that the messengers [peace be upon them] sent by God are the gardeners of this God-made world, who keep laying out gardens in this world and keep pruning and picking their foliage and fruits. Any civilization that crops up without their nursing it and which gets nourished without their watering and supervising it, that is like a wild tree in a forest, going by our tastes and likings it will have all those imperfections and deficiencies in it that are found in the wild trees and bushes of a forest; the likelihood is that instead of being a shady tree bearing sweet fruit, it will be none other than a

thorny tree bearing fruit of a bitter and repulsive taste.

The prophets, peace be upon them, are specialists at feeling the pulse of nature, and physicians conversant with the disposition of humanity. A civilization, whose make-up has not been prepared according to their method and advice, can never be on the golden mean, the imbalance of its disposition will never go away. The more the progress such a civilization will make, the more prominent will keep becoming its hidden imperfections, and the more the immoderate streaks inherent in its nature will keep surfacing. For this very reason we see that the peak period of all famous and historical civilizations of the world has been the period of maximum – public and moral – tumult and storm, in which the internal defects and immoderations of the system of their community life rise to the surface. During this very period of the peak of all mankind's developed civilizations, marital discords, worsening of domestic life, sex and gender tensions and problems, class struggles, moral diseases and mass lawlessness rise to their maximum and its end draws near. In other words, the period of its zenith and destruction happens to be one and the same.

Many people are not familiar with the fact that tenets [whether they be religious or social] are the firm foundation of a civilization. A civilization whose foundation does not rest on a few universally accepted ideas and truths, that civilization is baseless and an amusement for children. Only Revelation and Apostleship, grant the right tenets and then accord permanence and reinforcement to them; through them only, man obtains such universally accepted principles of a fundamental nature for his morals and community life that are permanent like the sky and the earth, and strong like the mountains; on their very foundation rises the whole citadel of civilization and urbanization. In the areas of morals, community life and way of life, only they serve as foundation material. After the relation of Revelation and apostleship slips away from a nation's hand or from the very beginning it fails to relate to prophets, peace be upon them, then in its sight no truth remains a truth, axioms become theories, and universally accepted principles turn into contentious issues, its public opinions change day and night, morning and evening; scientific truths keep changing, terminologies and definitions of moral conduct remain in a state of flux, and moral

philosophies are annulled all too often, there remains no standard of goodness and wickedness, and prosperity and disturbance, a thing that was etiquette yesterday, today the same thing is rudeness, today that which is called atrocity, is reinvented tomorrow as justice in precise, minds become unacquainted with the difference of the realities of things. That is a period when the syrup of that nation goes bad, its moral sense becomes dysfunctional and behind the façade of independence serious confusion of thought and contradiction of action is created; and at last there develops in it such anarchy and moral permissiveness which makes the existence of that nation impossible, and turns its self-built worldly heaven into a hell for it and makes it a plague for other nations and civilizations of the world.

Browse through the histories of the whole lot of human civilizations and their advanced formats, you will find the real reason of their collective and moral ills, fatal diseases and their eventual death and destruction to be this same instability of beliefs and theories of religion and morality, this same absence of universally accepted truths, and these very upheavals in standards of goodness and wickedness. Healthy nature, national traditions, and old-style training certainly protect it for a few days, but these are very weak type of things, they cannot confront the flood of misconduct, lawlessness and crisis of the nation. At the back of misconduct and lawlessness, for declaring them permissible and commendable, there happen to be various types of moral and social philosophies and scientific theories, whose power suppresses the voice of nature and also breaks the magic that terms like 'national traditions' and 'civilization' have about them, and gradually the civilizational wealth of that nation is drained of every type of universally accepted idea and every such thing that can serve as a criterion and standard for gauging goodness and wickedness, conduct and misconduct.

Similarly, the inevitable result of turning away from the teachings of Revelation and apostleship or of unawareness about them is that the entire idea of this life becomes nothing more than purely materialistic, and man's viewpoint about himself, purely zoological; because whatever sources of information are there in man's command, they do not inform us of anything more than this. Through them, besides this life, no other life is discovered, and with senses and observations alone one cannot figure out any other

reality of man except that he is a talking animal. This tenet and admission naturally drives man to that point of animal existence where apart from the feelings of physical pleasure and pain there remains no moral consciousness, and except for devotion to motives and expediencies, there remains no religion and philosophy.

It is prophet-hood only that grants to man the consciousness of his own superiority, civility and humanity and together with that it also develops in him the understanding that he is under the command of an All-Powerful Being, the Wisest of judges, and answerable before Him for the whole lot of his actions and conduct; this world is His very dominion and inhabitants of this world are His very slaves; that he is not free to possess, use, dispose and change anything in this dominion and have dealings with the inhabitants of this world.

Then, prophet-hood is not content with waking up the moral sense only, rather it gives to man a timetable and a detailed code of conduct. Upon good conduct promises him the pleasure of God and a time and place where His pleasing recompense will be granted to him – for human action there never was proven a stimulant better than this. Upon misconduct and violating the law warns of His torment and wrath – a deterrent more successful than which does not exist in the world. It instills into his heart and mind the conviction of God being the Present and the Omniscient, the All-Hearing, and the All-Seeing, and the Knower of the concealed and the manifest – a greater moral power than which for keeping man in discipline could not be discovered to this day. This is the very power which keeps man law-abiding in public and private, amidst cities and deserts, which eradicates serious and heinous crimes and centuries-old bad habits without the power of police and military, which merely on a verbal hint makes an entire nation give up habitual drinking, which pulls out criminals from cities and deserts and turns them over to courts and inspires them to confess to their crimes on their own.

Whichever the moral system that lacks the backing of this power of prophet-hood, that is only a philosophy for the bookshelf which cannot prevent even a single ordinary crime [please see reference 28 on next page] and even within the smallest of the small territories on earth cannot create a chaste

and moral atmosphere.

Whichever the civilization deprived of this Revealed code of conduct and whichever the nation whose side be devoid of this religious heart, that is standing on the edge of Hell's pit in this very world. Its material and scientific progress, its industrial and political victories, its conquest of the universe, its apparent civilization and etiquette, its sciences and arts, nothing can prevent it from falling into that pit, rather all these things will combine to accelerate the speed of its fall. Deprived of the safety and protection of Revelation and prophets, peace be upon them, whichever be the nation, these very sciences and etiquette [that develop without the guidance of prophets and whose core is not chaste and does not recognize God] collaborate in its moral decline and become its committed workers, and in the propagation and publication of immodesties, in popularizing shamelessness and misconduct, in changing the old views about good manners and bashfulness and labeling them as indecent, and in lending artistic beauty to crime and immodesties, work as agents of Satan. The social, moral and literary history of Greece, Rome and modern Europe is witness to it.

On this path of man's freedom, legislation could have proved to be a heavy

28. An excellent example of this is the failure of the American initiative on prevention of alcoholism and the abolition of the law of prohibition on drinking. Backing this initiative and law was a government most organized and the greatest in the world [The United States of America], unlimited wealth and capital, first-rate education and civilization, and limitless resources of broadcasting and publicity. Estimates place the spending on broadcasting and publications in connection with the anti-liquor campaign over a period of only six years at $ 65.0 million, and the literature that was published consisted of 9.0 billion pages. In connection with enforcement of the law 200 people lost their lives within a period of 13 years, 534,335 were imprisoned, fines imposed were an equivalent of GBP 16.0 million, goods and property confiscated was worth the equivalent of GBP 404.0 million. However, in spite of these extreme efforts American government and law, and its reform departments and associations could not bring their countrymen round to follow the law and abstain from drinking. Rather, on the contrary, ended up creating a craze for drinking among them and eventually after fourteen years, in 1933, `the democracy was compelled to abolish that law and had to rule the consumption of alcohol permissible. [For details please refer to the Urdu title *'Tanqeehaat';* Article*: Insaani qaanoon aur ilaahi qaanoon.*]

rock but man removed it effectively in this manner from his path that he himself became the legislator. When the source and fountainhead of law was declared to be human knowledge and experience, instead of the Revealed Book and Divine Revelation; and the law-maker was accepted to be majority opinion or power of human beings, instead of God; then all obstruction was removed from the path. In man's genetic make-up carnal desires and animal nature are in-built, he inherently wants to remain independent of prohibitions and restrictions, by nature he seeks pleasure and likes luxuries. Together with this, when in an individual, there be no fear of God and feeling of responsibility also, then which stimulant can prepare him to legislate such a law that would impose prohibitions and restrictions against himself, seize his independence, and dampen his enjoyment? Then again, when these law-makers happen to be human beings who were brought-up amidst those shaky beliefs, those inverted theories, that distorted mentality and those corrupt behaviors that were mentioned above, then how far is it proper to expect that they would legislate such a law?! And that law would prevent crimes and would not have any loophole for sin, immodesties and misconduct to pass through. Expectation from them should rather be that, through their strength to legislate and by their authority, they would issue certificates of justification and give legal status to acts of misconduct; during their tenure acts of misconduct[29] will become the law and virtues will be declared illegal. In the history of mutilated and semi-mutilated nations it is not a rare occurrence that serious crimes, on the

29. In modern history also such instances are found that, on the strength to legislate and majority opinion, certain moral and social crimes upon whose evil the humankind unanimously agrees were declared permissible under the law. It is not a very old incident, that in Germany of the pre-Nazi period, a propaganda was made for six continuous years in favor of the act of those people towards whom Prophet Lut [Lot], peace be upon him, had been sent; this oppressive reform job was done by that elderly public figure who had earlier served as the President of the world body on sexual reform. Eventually the country's Legislative Assembly passed the law by majority vote that this act is not legally a crime, the only condition is that both the parties should agree to it and if the passive partner is a minor then he who has the legal authority to act on his behalf can both accept a proposal for him and express his consent in the matter. More of such examples will be found in Maulana Abul Aa'laa Maudoodi's periodical '*Pardah*'.

strength of public opinion, became permissible, commendable and widely popular. Chastity became a crime in society, there remained no room for the chaste to live in that criminal society and public opinion accusing them of just this demanded their expulsion:

Drive out the followers of Lut from your city,
these are indeed men who want to be clean and pure![30]

The distinction about prophet-hood establishing a civilization in the world is that it does not give to man the right of law-making in it. In its civilization, man can no doubt be a sinner and can even violate a law, in its civilization he will have to bear the punishment for it, but he is not authorized to make even the slightest amendment in Divine law; its 'allowed' and 'forbidden' are lasting like the earth, the sky, the sun and the moon, and unalterable like the laws of nature, rather they are nature in precise in which alteration is ruled out.

[Establish] Allah's handiwork
according to the pattern on which He has made mankind:
no change [let there be] in the work [wrought] by Allah:
that is the standard Religion.[31]

For this reason, in its civilization, immodesties and prohibited things, sins and disapproved things, exhortation to acquire luxuries, products connected with fun, games and intoxication, the whole lot of crimes of immorality, and acts and occupations that applaud crime will always remain prohibited; and until their nature and the nature of man do not change [and neither of them is mutable], the order that applies to them also will not change.

The purpose of man-made laws happens to be only the establishment of some particular system, protection of public peace and maintenance of discipline among the inhabitants of a certain territory. Therefore, they concern themselves with those acts and morals of man that affect society and public life; they have no concern with personal morals and internal ills. The status of those laws is not that of a morals teacher and reformer, instead

30. V.56, C.27, *An Naml*; **31.** V.30, C.30, *Ar-Room*; The meaning of the Holy Quran; A Y Ali.

it is that of police and magistrate.

However, the purpose of Revealed laws is not merely to maintain order and discipline, rather it is to make human beings chaste and pious. Under their bye-laws, therefore, a few such things, such manners and such occupations will be prohibited which will not at all cross the minds of worldly law-makers. In them the whole lot of such loopholes will be closed through which sin and misconduct enter a society, hedonistic tendencies creep into dispositions, laziness and a laid-back attitude is created among the nation, immoral leanings and criminal bents of mind are created, through all of which, that weevil breeds in society which eats the insides of its roots and makes them hollow. The whole lot of such things will be forbidden that do not conform with its moral standard or are not in concord with its religious principle. Its civilization will not encourage music, will not like absorption in entertainment, fun and amusement, will not look with admiration at the race of adornment and pride, and wealth and property, so much so that useless and unnecessary constructions, whose purpose be nothing other than a display of pomp, show, elegance and enjoyment, will be considered contemptible in that civilization; the use of gold and silver cutlery will be prohibited altogether and the wearing of their ornaments and silk will be prohibited for its men; pictures[32], stone idols and human replicas will be absolutely forbidden and prohibited.

In man-made laws, adherence to the letter only happens to be necessary and the only deterrent for crimes happens to be a court sentence or the fear of police; where these deterrents may not be present, nothing obstructs the perpetration of crimes in that place, hearts are devoid of the greatness of law and the respect for it because it has been legislated by men like themselves, no image of whose sacredness exists in the minds of people. Often, law-makers happen to seize power and the position of law-making because of their perspicacity or wealth or power or electioneering efforts, and their moral status in absolute terms and their habits and traits fundamentally, are no higher than those of the common folk, rather

32. The Urdu word used here by the author is *Tasaaveer* which includes the whole range of products of various art and photography techniques e.g. drawings, etchings, paintings, stills and movies of human and animal forms. ***Please refer to pages 32-35, if necessary.**

sometimes they are intensely uncivilized, unprincipled, greedy, vile and given to eating bribes, hence sometimes for the sake of their aims and gains, for giving legal license to their weaknesses and acts of misconduct, and sometimes for flattering the general public and electorate they enact anti-principle laws, and as per expediency and whim keep on amending them. The public accepts their laws under compulsion and a large section among them tries to free itself from them and tries to frustrate them through its shrewdness and tricks, and a tug-o-war between the law and countrymen persists.

Contrary to this a law brought into effect by Revelation and apostleship happens to be as sacred and respectable for those who believe in God and apostle as their religious book and their own apostle is to them; in that atmosphere, to defeat it with one's shrewdness, to frustrate and subdue, and to harass and vex it, is out of the question as this act would be *Kufr** and rebellion in precise.

And those who endeavored to frustrate Our signs –
those! theirs shall be a torment of afflictive calamity.[33]

In this atmosphere, only observance of the law to the letter and its outward and physical face is not sufficient, rather the spirit of abiding by the law too is necessary, because the Law Maker and the Judge [Allah] is familiar with the Unseen, aware of the manifest and the concealed, and He cannot, by a superficial observance of the law, be deceived like the judges of the world.

It is not their meat nor their blood [of sacrificial animals]
that reaches Allah, it is your piety that reaches Him;[34]

A law that will be endowed with these intrinsic distinctions – what will be its civilizational influences? In a society, what degree of virtue, purity and chastity, trust and honesty, etiquette and bashfulness will it create? And when those people will hold the reins of a government and they will come to power in any part of the earth [a] who happen to possess such proven truths

* Please refer to pages 32-34 if necessary **33.** V.5 C.34, *Saba*, Daryabadi Quran Translation; Abdul Majid Daryabadi. **34.** V.37 C.22, *Al Haj*. The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Y. Ali.

and such unshakable tenets about religion, congregation, morals, way of life and civilization; which they have obtained from an eternal, everlasting, clean and safe fountainhead of knowledge and information; and which like the permanent laws of nature are not subject to alteration and abrogation [b] who have been trained amidst dispositions which, free from the human traits of greed, lusts etc., are a reflection of God's Attributes [c] whose law is another name for Divine Law and [d] who Allah the Exalted has asked to **stand out firmly for Justice, as witnesses**.[35] Then, will the results and fruits of their government and power be any different from what the Quran has foretold? The Quran says:

> **[They are] those who if We establish them in the land, establish regular prayer and give regular charity, enjoin the right and forbid the wrong.**[36]

And at their hands, in the normal course, the civilization and life style that will come into existence, can anybody doubt its virtue and stature? Contrary to this, a civilization that is established at the hands of those people, and a society that comes into existence through those:

[a] Who, as regards religion, morality, assembly, and human civilization either happen to possess no truths and universally accepted ideas altogether or they have just a few tastes and intuitions.

[b] Whose guesses and estimations keep changing with revolution around the sun.

[c] Who have no firm standard to differentiate between goodness and wickedness, and contemptible and commendable; and have no just balance to weigh moral values.

[d] Among whom good conduct be the name of motives and expediencies, and whose law be of their own making and subordinate to their knowledge, experience, necessity and expediency.

[e] Whose government be a means and servant of personal or dynastic or

35. V.135 C.4, *An Nisaa'* **36.** V.41, chapter 22, *Al Haj*; The Holy Quran; Translation: A. Y. Ali

national supremacy, and in the world it may not have any reform mission.

[f] Whose foundation does not rest on any principle and moral philosophy.

Then in that civilization and that society, can a man get any aid in fulfilling the purpose of his nature and reach up to his Ultimate Beloved? And if that civilization lives for some time and its roots go deep into the earth, then will man be able to even stay on his original nature? And will he be able to even remember his Ultimate Beloved? What other reason can there be to call that civilization a human civilization except that it has been established by those people who in their faces and appearances are human beings, although in their way of living they are lifeless machines; as regards their mentality and upbringing, ignorant cattle; and as regards their occupations and actions, blood-thirsty predators.



The fundamental cause of: (a) the good and prosperity of mankind and (b) the evolution of civilization

The noble prophets, peace be upon them, are not only the center and source of the right knowledge about God and the Knowledge of Certainties [of their own minds], rather besides this they also grant to human society one more wealth of inestimable value upon which cent per cent depends the good and prosperity of mankind and the building and progress of civilization. And that priceless capital is: [a] the most sacred sentiment of the love for good and aversion for evil, [b] and the auspicious resolve of giving sacrifices for pulverizing the powers of *shirk* [the devils] and its center [misconceptions] and the spread and advancement of good. The real and fundamental cause of all of man's advancements, eminent achievements, and impossible to ignore accomplishments, is this same sacred sentiment and auspicious resolve only, because all the means and resources, tools and equipment, and institutions of research and experimentation are subordinate to man's resolve and intention. The foundation of all accomplishment is that man should intend; and the source and fountainhead of the good in it have always been the teachings of the noble prophets, peace be upon them. During the period when they were prophets, peace be upon them, they cultivated among their nation and *Ummath* and their entire society the sentiment of love for goodness and aversion for nuisance, tried to infuse the support for truth and resistance to falsehood into their natures and dispositions. And in the long history of humankind, whenever this sentiment slumped, there arose a change in the nature of human beings and signs of beastliness and savagery appeared in them; as we observe in the conditions of various nations described in the Holy Quran, the noble prophets, peace be upon them, provided immediate treatment for it and converted barbarity and cruelty into mercy and pity, and humanity and politeness. They publicized their exalted teachings, constantly and continuously strived for it, paid no attention to comfort and rest, did not think of honor and dignity, so much so that did not worry about their health and life, and as a result of this very,

constant and heart-rending labor and perseverance, there were born among devouring predators and savages devoid of humanity, people with such pious souls whose breaths made the entire world fragrant, whose beauty and elegance lent fascination and exquisiteness to the history of humanity, who surpassed even the angels in their eminence and station, and by the blessedness of those very chosen, exemplary and worth-emulating individuals, a humanity that was all but ruined and destroyed got a new lease of life, justice and fair play began to reign, weaklings developed the courage and strength to recover their rights from the powerful, wolves worked as goatherds, the cool of compassion and kindness filled atmospheres, the scent of love and attachment spread in the air, the market of piety warmed up, franchises of Paradise glittered in the world, winds laden with the fragrance of belief and conviction began to blow, human souls found independence from the clutches of desire and lust, hearts were attracted towards acts of virtue like iron filings are towards a magnet.

Upon the civilization and urbanization of human beings and their evolution, as many favors are there of this blessed and holy category, no other category's are. Their grace and kindness has cast its cool shadow over the honor of human beings, their politeness, their moderation, their balance and indeed their entire life; under this very shadow of their grace and kindness is the survival of human life possible. Had it not been for the noble prophets, peace be upon them, the ship of humanity along with its knowledge, philosophy, wisdom, civilization and urbanization would have become an offering to the storm; and on the face of the earth instead of human beings, flocks of wild animals and predators would have been seen gamboling, who would neither recognize their Creator and Sustainer, nor would be acquainted with religion and morality; neither would they possess feelings of mercy and love and nor would any idea higher than food and water, or grass and fodder, enter their minds.

Today, whatever higher values, subtle and delicate feelings, the best and lofty moral teachings, right and gainful streams of knowledge or resolves to clash with falsehood are found in the world, the chain of their historical links goes back and ends nowhere except at divine Revelations, teachings of prophets [peace be upon them], their *invitation* and preaching, their striving

in various fields and on their highly sincere companions and disciples. And the world has [from beginning to end] been compelled to pick up the crumbs of the repast they were served, has always taken steps in the light spread by them only and always in the shade of the strong structure that they only had built it has taken shelter and led its life, and shall continue to do so. May peace and blessings of Allah be upon those holy souls, thousands and thousands of times.

Bahaar ab jo duniya mein aayee huee hai
Yeh sab paud unheen ki lagaa'ee huee hai

Blossom that's now appeared in the world,
the whole lot of this sapling, is theirs only.



The sense of honor and uprightness of the prophets about peace be upon them religion and Divine Law

The noble prophets [peace be upon them] arrive with a set of articles of faith, *invitational assignment* and message, about which they happen to have a very keen sense of honor and are very sensitive. Even if the expediency, and the acceptance and success of their *invitation* so warrants, they never in any circumstance get prepared to tolerate any amendment or alteration in their *Invitation* and *Shariath* [Divine law]. At their level there happens to be no room for flexibility and change of stand. Allah the Exalted addressing the last of His apostles ﷺ says:

Therefore, expound openly what thou art commanded,
and take no notice of those who join false gods with Allah.[37]

He even says:

O Messenger! Proclaim [the message] which hath been sent to thee from thy Lord. If thou didst not, thou wouldst not have fulfilled and proclaimed His Mission; and Allah will defend thee from men [who mean mischief].[38]

Also says:

Their desire is that thou shouldst be pliant: so would they be pliant.[39]

The stand of the apostle of Allah ﷺ on *Tawheed*, rather on all of Islam's fundamental articles of faith, to the extent that even on prayer [*Salah*], poor-due [*Zakat*], fasting [*Sawm*], Haj and other obligatory acts of religion, was not a flexible and expedient stand; which in every period has been the exclusive

37. V.94, Chapter 15, *Al Hijr*, the Holy Quran; Translation: S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi **38.** V.67, Chapter 5, *Al Ma'idah*; **39.** V.9, Chapter 68, *Al Qalam*, The Meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

distinction of political leaders [who self-confidently consider themselves to be pragmatic and practical people]. After the conquest of the city of Taif, a delegation of the second most respected Arab tribe of Thaqeef, after Quraish, accepts Islam then appears in the exalted presence of the Apostle of Allah, ﷺ, and requests that the idol named Laat [because of which Taif enjoyed centrality and sanctity only next to Makkah] be left as it is for three years and it be spared the affair being conducted with other idols. The Apostle of Allah ﷺ flatly rejects the request. Members of the delegation ask for a grace period of two years, then one year, the beloved prophet ﷺ continuously refuses, so much so that they tone down their request to, 'a grace period of only thirty days be allowed after our return to Taif', but instead of approving their last request the Apostle of Allah, ﷺ, orders Abu Sufyan bin Harb, may Allah be pleased with him [who had family ties in Taif] and a member of the Thaqeef tribe itself, Mughairah bin Sha'ybah, that they go and demolish Laat and its temple. Members of the delegation also make the following request: That they be excused from offering *Salah*, and he ﷺ replies that: That religion has no virtue which has no *Salah*. After this conversation, they return to their hometown and Abu Sufyan and Mughairah, may Allah be pleased with them, also go with them and demolish Laat, and Islam spreads throughout the tribe of Thaqeef, so much so that the whole of Taif becomes Muslim.[41]

Also distinctive of the noble prophets, peace be upon them, is that in their preaching and *invitation*, dialogue and explanation, they employ that very style and those very depictions that happen to be in harmony with the spirit of their *invitation* and the temperament of prophet-hood. Candidly and with utmost clarity they *invite* mankind to the Hereafter, arouse interest in the Heaven and its blessings and delights, frighten with the Hell-fire and its dreadful torments, and mention Heaven and Hell in such a way, as if, they are before their eyes. Instead of logic and arguments, and expediencies and interests, they demand belief in the Unseen.

Their period also is not altogether void of materialistic philosophies and theories [which correspond to the level and conditions of their period]; in that period also a few classes have their especial terminologies. The

41. Abridged from pages 458-459, vol. 1, *Zaad Al M'aad*.

prophets, peace be upon them, do not happen to be unfamiliar with them, and they also very well understand that these philosophies and terminologies are the currency of the time and they are very much in vogue these days, but they do not employ them for attracting people and for inviting them over to their side. They extend the *invitation* to believe [a] in Allah the Exalted, His attributes and acts, [b] in angels, [c] in fate (bad or good), and [d] in the rising of the dead. Without being hesitant or apologetic at all, they announce that the reward of acceptance of their *invitation* and believing in them is the Garden [*Jannath*] and the approval and pleasure of God the Exalted.

In connection with inviting mankind to faith, an excellent example of this prophetic disposition, manner and course of action is in the event of the Second Pledge of 'Uqbah. When a number of Yathribites [Yathrib: old name of Madinah] among whom were 73 men and 2 ladies, came to Makkah Mu'azzamah for Haj and gathered in a valley near 'Uqbah, the apostle of Allah ﷺ accompanied by his respected uncle *Sayyadna '*Abbas bin Abdul Muttalib, may Allah be pleased with him [who had not until then become Muslim] arrived there. He ﷺ recited verses from the Holy Quran, *invited* them towards God the One, and inspired them to enter Islam, and said that, I take from you this vow and pledge that you will conduct with me the same affair of protection and care that you conduct with your own family members. The Ansar took the pledge, and took his word that he, ﷺ, will never leave them and go back to his people. They were intelligent and wise people, and were well aware of the far-reaching and dangerous consequences of this mutual agreement. They fully understood that they are inviting enmity with the whole lot of friendly tribes, rather with the entire Arab country. One of their companions, a seasoned veteran, ['Abbas bin 'Ibadah Ansari, may Allah be pleased with him] also further apprised and warned them of those consequences, but in response they unanimously said: Inviting the risk of the loss of riches, wealth and property, and the death and destruction of prominent members of our family, we are taking the beloved prophet ﷺ, with us. Then, turning courteously to the apostle of Allah ﷺ they submitted: O Apostle of Allah! If we live up to our promise, what will we get?

At such a crucial moment, had there been in the place of the apostle of God,

peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, some political leader, some national leader or somebody with a sense of mere political correctness, his answer would have been that – discord and confusion is over, now you will get organized, the ordinary status of a tribe is over, now your presence will be recognized throughout Arabia and you will rise as a power. This was not some fantastic or unimaginable idea, instead all the signs and circumstantial evidences were pointing towards its possibility and becoming a reality. Somebody from among those Yathribites themselves had said earlier, that:

> We have come here leaving behind our nation in such a state, that perhaps there would hardly be any nation with the sort of enmity and discord that is present in our nation. We hope that God the Exalted organizes them through you [ﷺ], now we shall go to them and present this *invitation* of yours before them, and the religion that we have accepted we shall also invite them to it. If God the Exalted causes them to rally behind your personality [ﷺ], then there shall be no human being more respected and dignified to be in power than you [ﷺ].[36]

However, the Apostle of Allah, ﷺ, in his answer to their question that 'O Apostle of Allah! What will we get [?]', was content with saying only: '*Jannat'* [The Garden of Heaven]. At that point they said: Sir kindly give us your blessed hand; he ﷺ extended his hand and they took the pledge.[37]

It is the effect of this very sense of honor and completion of the assignment of prophet-hood, that apostles, peace be upon them, neither happen to be tolerant of any change in any commandment of Divine law and nor keep the execution of any commandment due to somebody's recommendation and influence, suspended and postponed. Near and distant, kindred and strangers, upon all in like manner they enforce the commandments and penal ordinances of Allah the Exalted. For instance: Apropos a lady of the tribe of Bani Makhzoom who had committed the crime of theft; Usama Bin Zaid, may Allah be pleased with him – towards whom the apostle of Allah ﷺ was particularly affectionate and kind – appeared for recommendation in his ﷺ exalted presence, upon that the apostle of Allah ﷺ, became furious and

36. *Seerat*, Ibn Hisham, Vol. 1, page 429. **37.** *Seerat*, ibn Hisham, Vol. 1, page 446.

said, ‘Do you make a recommendation concerning ordinances fixed by Allah?’ Then he ﷺ delivered a talk in which he ﷺ said, ‘O people! Before you, followers of prophets were killed [through Allah’s wrath] because among them when some important person and member of a reputed family committed theft they let him off, and some weak and ordinary man committed theft, then on him the penal ordinance was enforced. By God the Glorified! If Muhammad’s daughter, Fatima, even will commit theft, I shall not refrain from chopping off her hand.’[38]

It is this same sense of honor which was transferred among the companions and close aides of the noble prophets, peace be upon them. Turning a blind eye to success and failure, and profit and loss, the noble companions also, may Allah be pleased with them, guarded the teachings of Quran, commandments of *Shariath* and the rules and regulations of Islam. Its magnificent example in history is that incident of *Farooq-e-A’zam*, may Allah be pleased with him, which took place in Makkah between him and Jablah ibn Aiham Ghassani [who was an important link in the Aal-e-Jufnah line of kings]. The latter came to Madinah Munawwarah accompanied by five hundred members of the tribe of ‘Akka wa Ghassan. When he entered Madinah, there was no maiden and veiled woman who had not come out to catch a glimpse of him and his gaudy dress. And when *Sayyadna* ‘Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, went for Haj, Jablah too went with him. He had not yet finished circumambulating the *Baitullah* [Holy Ka’bah] that a man from the tribe of Bani Fazarah inadvertently stepped over the edge of his flowing leg-sheet and it got untied [did not come off]. Jablah raised his hand and dealt a powerful slap that caught Fazaari on the nose. Fazaari filed a plaint with *Sayyadna* ‘Umar, may Allah be pleased with him. The Ameer-ul-Mo’mineen [title of a reigning caliph] issued summons for Jablah, and when he came, asked him, ‘what is this you did?’ He said: Yes! Ameer-ul-Mo’mineen, he wanted to take off my leg-sheet, had it not been for the respect of Ka’bah I would have struck his forehead by the sword. *Sayyadna* ‘Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, said: You have confessed. Now, either you reconcile with that man or otherwise I will avenge him. Jablah said: what will you do to me? *Sayyadna* ‘Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, said that, I will tell him to hit you on the nose just like you had struck

38. Chapter: Ordinance on theft and its assessment; Book of Penal Ordinances; Sahih Muslim.

him on his nose. Jablah exclaimed with amazement and surprise: Ameer-ul-Mo'mineen! How can this be? He is a common man and I am the sovereign of my area and people. *Sayyadna* 'Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, said: Islam has made you and him equals, now except in terms of the fear of God and piety, and peace and safety, on no other basis you can be superior to him. Jablah said: My impression was that by accepting Islam I will command more respect and credibility than I did during *Ignorance*. *Sayyadna* 'Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, said: Leave these topics. Either reconcile with that man or else get ready for *Qisaas* [like retaliation for physical injury].

When Jablah saw this stern attitude of *Sayyadna* 'Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, he requested that, 'A chance be given to me tonight to think over it'. *Sayyadna* 'Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, accepted his request. In the stillness of the night and while people were unaware, Jablah rode away with his horses and camels in the direction of Syria. In the morning no one knew where he was and there was no sign of him in Makkah. After a longtime, when from Jasamah bin Musahaq Kinai, may Allah be pleased with him, who had happened to attend his court, *Sayyadna* 'Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, heard the news of his regal pomp and show, he only said: He remained deprived, purchased the world for the Hereafter, vain remained his trading.[39]

THE ELEMENT OF WISDOM IN INVITING MANKIND TO FAITH

It does not mean that the noble prophets, ﷺ, do not employ wisdom in connection with *invitation* and the spread of Allah's word, and do not talk to people according to their intelligence and comprehension. God forbid! Such a thing would literally be contrary to many evidently clear verses of the Holy Quran and tens of incidents that appear in the biography of the beloved prophet, ﷺ. Allah the Exalted says:

We sent not a messenger except [to teach] in the language of his own people, in order to make things clear to them.[40]

39. *Futooh al-Baldaan,* page 142 (abridged); and *Tareekh*, volume 2, page 281; Ibn Khuldoon.
40. Verse 4, Chapter 14, *Ibrahim*, The Meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

The sense of 'language' here is not limited to a few sentences and words, it covers: correct usage, style of conversation, and method of instruction, everything. Its fascinating example is visible in the counsels that Prophet Yusuf, peace be upon him, gave to his two companions in the prison, and in the dialogues that Prophet Ibrahim and Prophet Musa, peace be upon them, had with their respective nations and the kings of their respective times.[41] Allah the Exalted has instructed His last prophet, ﷺ, and through him every reader of the Quran, and every preacher and missionary of Islam, as follows:

Invite [all] to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways most gracious.[42]

When the beloved prophet, ﷺ, used to send the noble Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, on missions of *Invitation* and the spread of Allah's word, his last advice used to be, produce politeness, affection, ease and facility and give glad tidings of the Hereafter. He ﷺ counseled *Sayyadna* M'aaz bin Jabal and *Sayyadna* Abu Moosa bin Ash-She'ri, may Allah be pleased with them, at the time of sending them to Yemen: 'Make things easy, do not be strict, give glad tidings, do not scare away'. And Allah the Exalted Himself while addressing the beloved prophet, ﷺ, has said:

It is part of the Mercy of Allah that thou dost deal gently with them. Wert thou severe or harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about thee;[43]

The apostle of Allah, ﷺ, told the noble Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, in general terms that, 'You have been raised to create ease, and not raised to create difficulty'.[44]

Explicit verses of the Holy Quran and proofs in this chain of citations are innumerable, and to take all of them in one's orbit is difficult.[45] This same

41. For a psychological, linguistic and literary analysis of this counsel and dialogue, please refer to the author's Urdu title, *Da'wat-o-Tableegh ka Mo'ajizanah Asloob*; Publisher: Academy of Islamic Research and Publication, Lucknow, India. **42.** V.125, C.16, *An-Nahl*, **43.** V.159, Chapter 3, *Aal-i Imran*, The Meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Y. Ali. **44.** Pg. 35, Vol. 1; *Sahih* Bukhari **45.** On this subject readers are recommended to study: Chapter: *At Tayseer,* Vol. 1, *Hujjatullah al-Baalighah* (Arabic); by *Hazrath* Shah Waliullah.

dignity has been distinctive of the earlier prophets also, peace be upon all of them. While mentioning many prophets by their names, the Lord said in the end:

These were the men to whom We gave the Book and Authority, and prophet-hood;[46]

However, this making things easy, stepwise and facile, was related to education and training and issues that were few and far between which had nothing to do with the articles of faith and the fundamental principles of religion. In matters that relate to the collective and divinely set limits, prophets [peace be upon them] of every age happen to be more inflexible than steel and firmer than the mountains.



46. Verse 89, Chapter 6, *Al An'aam*; The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

The emphasis of Quran on obeying and emulating the prophets
peace be upon them

The Glorious Quran frequently emphasizes to obey the prophets, peace be upon them, adopt their habits and manners, lead life on their pattern, and to the extent possible develop a resemblance to them, and it says:

Ye have indeed in the Messenger of Allah
a beautiful pattern [of conduct]
for anyone whose hope is
in Allah
and the Final Day
and who engages much
in the praise of Allah.[47]

It instructs Muslims that they regularly make the following supplication:

Guide us Thou unto the path straight.
The path of those whom Thou hast favored;
not of those on whom
is indignation brought down,
nor of the astray.[48]

And undoubtedly, the leaders of men honored with God's favor are the prophets and apostles only, peace be upon them. This supplication has also been included in the *Salah* [prayer]. Whenever man will abide by the laws this supplication contains and in his character and looks try to resemble those favored slaves, he will become close to God and honorable in His sight.

47. V.21, Chapter 33, *Al Ahzaab*; The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali. **48.** V.5-7, Chapter 1, *Al Faatihah*; Daryabadi Quran Translation; Abdul Majid Daryabadi

Respect and love for the noble prophets
peace be upon them

Quran seeks for the prophets, peace be upon them, that honor and respect, and veneration and deference, which should be the produce of the depths of the heart. It wants to create an emotional attachment and love for them, and does not settle for only such obedience to them which is devoid of emotions, love and reverence, like, that customary relation which subjects have with a king and civilians have with other military or political leaders. Quran does not consider it adequate that a believer merely fulfills the obligations of giving *Zakat* [poor-due] and *Sadqaat* [propitiatory offerings], and completes the formalities of commandments, rather its demand is also as follows:

That ye may believe in Allah
and His apostle, and may assist him and honor him.[49]

Those who believe in him [His apostle] and side with him.[50]

For this very reason it issued orders for every such thing in which their honor and dignity would be preserved, and prohibited every such thing that might be a cause of disrespect for them, and that might hurt their honor, lessen their dignity and diminish their greatness.

O ye who believe! Raise not your voices above the voice of the prophet
nor speak aloud to him in talk, as ye speak aloud to one another,
lest your deeds become vain and ye perceive not.
Those that lower their voice in the presence of Allah's messenger –

49. V.9, C.48, *Al Fath*; Daryabadi Quran Translation; Abdul Majid Daryabadi. NB: 'assist him and honor him': Most commentators agree that the pronoun 'Him' refers to Allah, while a few, including the author Sheikh Nadwi, believe it refers to the beloved prophet ﷺ. **50.** V.157, C.7, *Al A'raaf*; Daryabadi Quran Translation; Abdul Majid Daryabadi.

their hearts Allah has tested for piety:
For them is Forgiveness and a great Reward.[51]

Deem not the summons of the messenger among yourselves like the summons of one of you to another.[52]

For this very reason after the demise of the beloved prophet, ﷺ, his wives were forbidden upon his followers.

Nor is it right for you that ye should annoy Allah's messenger
or that ye should marry his widows after him at any time.
Truly such a thing is in Allah's sight an enormity.[53]

Apart from this, many explicit and categorical orders have demanded love for the apostle, ﷺ, and to give him precedence over one's own life, property, family and children.

It appears in both Sahih Bukhari and Sahih Muslim, that the apostle of Allah, ﷺ, said: *None of you can become a believer until I become more beloved to him than his father, his son, and all mankind*. In Tabrani's compilations *Moajjam Kabeer* and *Moajjam Ausath* the words *'his own self'* also appear in this tradition.

And similarly he ﷺ said: *Whosoever possessed three qualities, he could experience the sweetness of belief; one, he who loves Allah and His apostle more than others . . .* [till the end of the tradition].

Here, it is also necessary to clarify that the relation the noble prophets, peace be upon them – whose leader is the revered being of the last of the prophets, *Sayyadna* Muhammad, the apostle of Allah ﷺ, – have with mankind and those nations towards whom they are sent is not like that of a postman and mail carrier, whose responsibility is only to deliver letters and mail to the addressees, after which he has no concern with those people and those people have nothing to do with that intermediary and mailman, in

51. V.2-3, C.49, *Al Hujraat.* **52.** V.63, C.24, *An Noor*. **53.** V.53, chapter 33, *Al Ahzaab*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

their doings and powers they are absolutely independent; and the relation of those nations – towards whom the noble prophets, peace be upon them, were sent – with their respective prophets and apostles happens to be merely a passing and legalistic relation, and in their character, ways and manners, tastes and tendencies, and their individual lives as well as family lives they have no interest.

It is that wrong, baseless idea and misconception which was prevalent in those circles who were unfamiliar with the exalted place of prophet-hood and the prophets, peace be upon them, and in our times is widespread among those circles, who are unfamiliar with the station that *Sunnath* [practices of the prophet ﷺ] occupies, refuse to believe in the *Traditions* and in the fact that they are conclusive argument in numerous matters, and upon whom is a sway of Christian ideas of religion and the domination of Western style of thinking.

Contrary to the foregoing, the reality is that the noble prophets, peace be upon them, happen to be perfect examples for all mankind, excellent role models worth emulating, and as regards morals, tastes and tendencies, rejection and acceptance, and union and separation, the most complete

The teachings of the Holy Quran and the *Noble Traditions* are complimentary in nature. While the Holy Quran is from Allah the Exalted, the Noble Traditions are a record of the beloved Prophet's – peace and blessings of Allah be upon him – words and deeds. '*Ahadith*', '*Hadith* literature' and 'The Noble Traditions' or simply 'Traditions', are synonymous terms. One classification differentiates The Noble Traditions in to Prophetic Traditions and Sacred Traditions. The Sacred Traditions [called *Ahadith Qudsiyah* in Arabic; singular: *Hadith Qudsi*], are a record of those of Allah's revelations to the beloved Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, which are not part of the Holy Quran.

and ultimate standard. They happen to be the focus of divine gifts and the center of His Kindnesses and Revelations. Their morals and habits, the ways and manners of their life, all are likeable in the sight of God. Among lifestyles: their lifestyle, among the morals of individuals and groups: their morals, among the diverse habits of people: their habits, become the choicest in Allah's sight. The path that prophets adopt, peace be upon them, that path becomes the favorite at God's Threshold and it earns precedence over other paths, only because the feet of prophets, peace be upon them, have trodden that path. Allah's love and liking gets attached with all things

that are their favorite and symbolize them, and with articles and acts that relate to them; to adopt them and to produce a glimpse of their morals becomes the shortest and easiest way to be honored with Allah's love and pleasure, because the friend of a friend is considered a friend, and the friend of an enemy, an enemy. The last of the prophets ﷺ was made to say:

Say [O Muhammad]: If you do love Allah, follow me:
Allah will love you and forgive your sins;
for Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.[54]

Contrary to this, inclination of the heart towards those who are bent upon doing wrong and have adopted the path of *Kufr* [rejection of faith], preference for their lifestyle, and resemblance with their extrinsic and intrinsic qualities is reported to bring Allah's sense of honor into action and take the slave away from Allah; it was said:

And incline not to those who do wrong, or the Fire will seize you;
and ye have no protectors other than Allah,
nor shall ye be helped.[55]

The name of these distinctive prophetic habits and practices in the language and terminology of Divine law [*Shariath*] is ***normal traits*** and ***practices rooted in correct guidance*** [*Khisaal-e-fitrat* and *Sunan-al-huda*] on which the *Shariath* offers both education and inducement. Adoption of these morals and habits colors people in the color of the prophets, peace be upon them, and it is that color about which Allah the Exalted says:

Ours is the dye of Allah! and who is better at dyeing than Allah!
And we are His worshippers.[56]

54. V.31, Chapter 3, *Aal-i Imran*, **55.** V. 113, Chapter 11, *Hud*, Meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali. **56.** V.138, Chapter 2, *Al Baqrah*, Daryabadi Quran Translation; Abdul Majid Daryabadi. **NB:** Readers will like to know here that translating the Arabic word *sibghah* in this verse not as dye but as baptism, Abdullah Yusuf Ali has translated it as follows: **[Our religion is] The Baptism of Allah: And who can baptize better than Allah? And it is He who we worship.** *Sibghah*: the root meaning implies a dye or color, apparently the Arab Christians mixed a dye or color in the baptismal water, implying that the baptized person got a new color in life. We do not believe that it is necessary to be baptized to be saved.

This is the very secret of giving preference to one habit over another habit, one morality over another morality, one set of ways and manners over another set of ways and manners, in religion and Divine law [*Shariath*]. For this very reason the Divine law in Islam [*Shariath-e Islami*] declares it to be the tradition of the faithful, fulfilment of the demand of nature; and those ways that are against it as deviation from healthy nature and the tradition of the people of *Ignorance**. And in both these methods and paths – in spite of the fact that there are cultured human beings with brains and understanding, also on this side, as also on the other side – the difference is merely in the fact that one has been adopted by the apostles of God and His beloved slaves and the second is of those people and nations who do not have the light of guidance and revealed knowledge. Under this principle are covered eating and drinking, dissimilarity of acts of the right hand and the left hand, dress and adornment, and many principles of mode of living and civilization. And ***the practices*** [*Sunnath*] is an extensive chapter under the Practices of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and Islamic Jurisprudence;[57] as far as the revered being of the Apostle of Allah ﷺ is concerned, there exists a need to lay all the more emphasis on and take all the more care of this aspect. With the being of the beloved prophet ﷺ, a relationship as per law and protocol does not suffice, such spiritual and emotional attachment and such deep and eternal love is desired that would take precedence over the love for life, property and family.

It appears in a tradition of *Sahih* that:

None of you will become a believer until I become more beloved to him than his own offspring, parents and the whole lot of people.[58]

Another tradition contains: *None of you will become a believer until I be more dear and beloved to him than his own self*.[59]

In this connection, the need is to remain safe and cautious against the whole lot of those opposing causes and decelerators that dry the springs of this love

*Explanation in textbox, page 8. **57.** For details please refer to the Urdu title by the author *Mansab-e-nabuvat aur uske aali muqaam hamileen*, pages 118 – 120. **58.** Sahih Bukhari and Sahih Muslim. **59.** Musnad Ahmad.

or weaken it, and become the cause of [a] a dullness in the sentiments and feelings of love [b] weakness in the sentiment of observing the *Sunnath* [c] hesitation in regarding the beloved prophet ﷺ as the guide of the straight path, the seal of apostles, patron of all, and [d] disaffection from and inattention towards the study of the *Seerath* [biography of the beloved prophet ﷺ] and the Noble Traditions. Detailed studies of certain chapters of the Holy Quran, namely, The Confederates, The Chambers and The Victory etc.; contemplation upon the inclusion of *darud shareef* and *salat*[60] in the sitting posture of prayers and in the Funeral prayer; deciphering the secret of inducement contained in the Holy Quran on reciting the *darud shareef*; and noting the abundant number of traditions that exist on the virtues of *darud shareef*, lead one to the inevitable conclusion that desired from a Muslim with regard to the apostle of Allah ﷺ is a little beyond what is called a relation only as per law and protocol and which formality is completed by mere outward obedience. Instead, desired is also that sentiment of deference and etiquette, love and gratitude, and being thankful, whose founts should have sprung from the depths of the heart, and which should have permeated into the vein and fiber of a human being. This very reverence full of love, and love tinted with respect, the Holy Quran has expressed by the words 'assist' and 'honor':

and that ye may assist and honor Him.[61]

Its shining and manifest examples can be seen:

- During the Battle of Rajee' in the event involving *Sayyadna* Khubaib bin 'Adi and Zaid bin Ad-Duthna, may Allah be pleased with them.
- On the occasion of the Battle of Uhud[62] in the conduct of Abu Dujanah and *Sayyadna* Talha [may Allah be pleased with them].
- Also during the Battle of Uhud in the reply of the Muslim lady from the tribe of Bani Dinar.

60. *Darud/ Darud shareef*: Supplications specific to invoking Allah's peace and blessings upon the beloved prophet ﷺ. *Salat*: salutations. **61.** V.9, C.48, *Al Fath*, Holy Quran; Translation: Abdullah Yusuf Ali. **62.** Both these battles are in the class of *Ghazwat* [Arabic] i.e. battles fought under the command of the beloved prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.

- In the great love, respect and honor that the Noble Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, had for the apostle of Allah ﷺ, noticing which on the occasion of the Treaty of Hudaibiyah, Abu Sufyan, may Allah be pleased with him, [who had not accepted Islam till then] had spontaneously said: I have not seen anybody to be so much in love with anybody, the way that the Companions of Muhammad ﷺ love Muhammad ﷺ. And the envoy of the Tribe of Quraish, 'Urwah bin Mas'ood Thaqfi, may Allah be pleased with him, said that: I swear by God, I have also seen the palaces of Emperor Caesar and King Khusro; I have not seen any king being respected in the manner that the Companions of Muhammad ﷺ respect Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.[63]

The greater portion of this love for the Apostle ﷺ, came in the lot of those eminent scholars, reformers and revivalists, prominent personalities and leaders who had imbibed within themselves the true spirit of religion and in whose fate it was to perform the important feat of the preservation and revival of the religion and the *Millath*. Without this holy love which keeps to the commandments and etiquette of the *Shariath* and is modeled on the pattern of the noble companions, may Allah be pleased with them, a faithful emulation and observance of the example set by the beloved prophet ﷺ, firmness on the path of *Shariath*, an honest appraisal of the self, and in hardship and ease, and willingness and unwillingness of disposition, obedience to God and His apostle ﷺ is not possible. This precisely is the

63. Complete events may be referred to in books on the life of the beloved Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. When Zaid bin Ad-Duthna, may Allah be pleased with him, was being escorted to the place of his execution, at that time Abu Sufyan said to him that: Would you like that Muhammad [ﷺ] were in your place; and you were safe and secure in your home? *Sayyadna* Zaid, may Allah be pleased with him, said: By God, I would not even like that wherever Muhammad ﷺ is, over there even a thorn pricks him and I keep sitting in my home comfortably. [*Seerat* Ibn Hisham, volume 2, page 172]. The husband, brother and father of a Muslim lady of the tribe of Bani Dinar were martyred in the Battle of Uhud. When she was informed about this incident, without any premeditation she said, 'Tell me how is the Apostle of Allah [ﷺ]?' People said, praise be to Allah, he [ﷺ] is quite well. She said, 'Let me have a glimpse of him [ﷺ]', when she saw his [ﷺ] blessed face she exclaimed, 'As long as you [ﷺ] are there, every calamity is insignificant'. [Ibn Hisham]. Abu Dujana, may Allah be pleased with him, made himself a shield for the Apostle of Allah ﷺ, and *Sayyadna* Abu Talha, may Allah be pleased with him, made his arm a barrier, to the extent that it was rendered immovable and of no use. [*Al Asaabah*].

treatment for [many types of] psychological diseases and an effective means for the purification of mind and moral reform, a wave of love washes away all blockage, runs through vein, fiber, body and soul, and gets absorbed therein.

Shakh-e-gul mein jis tarah
baad-e-seher gahi ka nam

The way is lodged in a flowering bough,
the moisture of the morning breeze.

Muslims who once were a pirouetting flame because of the love of Allah and His Apostle ﷺ are reduced to dry timber and cold ash without it.

Bujhi ishq kee aag andher hai
Musalman naheen khak ka dher hai

The fire of love has died
disorder is left, a mess remains;
the Muslim spirit is there no more
a heap of lifeless dust remains.



In the very obedience and love of the beloved Prophet ﷺ lies the success of the nation

Destinies of nations are associated with the obedience of and loyalty to the prophets – peace be upon them – sent among them, in rallying around their flag, in adopting their characters, and whether respect or humiliation, in all circumstances, remaining affiliated to their leadership.

Accordingly, no *Ummath* [page 51: see reference 91] can succeed together with and in spite of the whole lot of its strengths, intellect and resources, age, civilization, philosophies, its circumstances and vicissitudes, and the whole lot of its advancements, until it does not obey its prophet ﷺ, love him, and strive for furthering his *Invitation* [page 77: see textbox] in every condition; and whichever *Ummath*, shifts from this path, in order to acquire honor, supremacy, power and clout, and trusts its own political sagacity or the backing of some superpower then its result except for ignominy and failure, internal confusion and disgrace, after a while, is nothing else.



Greatness of the Apostleship of *Sayyadna* Muhammad ﷺ and its need to humanity

During the 6th century of the Christian era the state of affairs seen on the global scale is that the whole humankind is not just inclined to commit suicide, rather bent upon it, it has, as if, vowed to commit suicide. Throughout the world preparations are being made for suicide. The picture that Allah the Exalted has painted of this scene and state of affairs, in the Noble Quran, none among the greatest of the great painters, writers and historians can paint a picture better than that. He says:

And remember with gratitude Allah's favor on you;
for ye were enemies
and He joined your hearts in love,
so that by His Grace,
ye become brethren;
and ye were on the brink of the Pit of Fire,
and He saved you from it.[64]

Our historians and biographers could not fill all elements in their portrayal of *ignorance*. They are not only excusable, rather they deserve our thanks because the inventory of literature and language would have fallen far short of the requirements of the task. The reality and the situation at that time was so tough, so critical, so formidable, and so convoluted and delicate that its illustration by a painter's brush and its depiction by employing the most excellent of the excellent masteries and capabilities in language and literature was not possible. How can a historian do justice to it? The *Age of Ignorance*, in which apostleship was conferred upon *Sayyadna* Muhammad ﷺ, was that the question of the fall and moral deterioration of one or two nations? Was only idol worship the issue, was the censure and crimes of

64. V.103, C.3, *Aal-I Imran*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

morality the issue, was it the issue of alcoholism, gambling, hedonism, greed, trampling of rights, atrocity and tyranny, financial exploitation, despotic and cruel governments, cruel systems and unjust laws? Was the issue that, a father in some country was burying alive his newborn daughter? The issue was that man was erasing every sign of humanity. The issue was not that a few heartless and hard-hearted people of Arabia in order to save their innocent daughters from false disgrace and imagined shame and indignity, that was rooted in an idea of their own making and a cruel tradition, wanted to bury them with their own hands. The issue was that mother earth wanted to bury alive her entire progeny. That period is over. Now how is one to recreate that period. People who had seen that period, they only knew and understood its reality.

The issue was also not of some single country and nation, nor was it of some single misunderstanding and deception, the issue was of the destiny of humanity. The issue was of the future of humankind. If an artist were to exhibit such a painting in which it was shown that humankind is being represented by a human being, an embodiment of beauty and grace, with a well-built and athletic physique, who is a masterpiece of God's industry, through whom the name of Adam is alive and his line of succession still exists, who is the envy of the angels and the purpose of the creation, upon whose head Allah has placed the crown of *Khilaafat* [the exalted position of being His Deputy] and because of whom this planet is not in ruins and a wilderness, it is an inhabited place and a heaven; before this human being extends a sea of fire, it is an extremely formidable trench whose depth is immeasurable, that human being is standing ready to dive into it, his feet have lifted off the ground and he is about to fly through space, it is clearly visible that in a few moments he will disappear into the darkness of its depths. If such a picture of that period were painted, then, to some extent one could have an idea of that situation which had prevailed at the time of the conferment of apostleship on *Sayyadna* Muhammad ﷺ, and to describe this very reality it has been said: **And ye were on the brink of the Pit of Fire. And He saved you from it.**[65]

And prophet-hood has stated the same idea in a parable; the beloved

65. V.103, C.3, *Aal-I Imran*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

prophet ﷺ said that the example of the *Invitation* and guidance with which I have been sent to this world is as though – a man lighted a fire, when the light from it lit up the surroundings, then from all directions swarms of moths and insects that tend to fall on the fire began to gather and jump into it, similarly, you want to fall and dive into `the Fire and one by one I hold you by your waists and save and pull you away from it.[66]

In fact, the real issue was just so much that the boat of humanity had to be rowed to the shore with safety. Once man will regain his right frame of mind, once the proverbial golden mean and balance will develop in life, then will arrive the time for all those constructive, welfare, educational, literary and developmental initiatives and plans, whose expertise is found among different individuals and well-wishers of humanity. Really, the whole world is indebted to the prophets, peace be upon them, that they saved humankind from those dangers that were hanging over its head like a drawn sword; no educational, constructive and reform work of the world, no philosophy, no school of thought, can dismiss the favor they have done to it. If you ask the truth, the present day world in terms of its existence, progress and the right to live is under the obligation of prophets only, peace be upon them. Through screams of their condition human beings announced many times that now their utility is over, and now for the world and for themselves they possess no benefit, blessings and compassion, and no message and *Invitation*. They themselves filed petitions and gave evidences in the Court of God against themselves, their file was ready, and they had proved themselves deserving of the severest of the severe punishments, rather of the death penalty.

When civilization transgresses its limits, when it altogether ignores morality, when except for his ignoble desires and the fulfillment of the carnal demands of his heart man overlooks every purpose and every truth, when in his side instead of the heart of a human being, there develops the heart of a wolf and tiger, when in his body an artificial stomach and an unhampered baser self takes birth, when the world reels under a fit of madness, at that time God's Authority, in order to punish it or to nullify the intoxication of its frenzy, conceives ever new scalpels and ever new surgeons.

66. Sahih Bukhari [Mishkaat Sharif, Volume 1, page 28].

Kartee hai mulookiyat andaz-e-junoon paida
Allah ke nashtar hain, Taymoor ho ya Changez

Autocracy creates, a behavior schizophrenic
scalpels are of Allah: be he Timur, be he Changez.

You replace the word *autocracy* by *civilization*, because the deterioration of civilizations and civilizational frenzy is more dangerous and more extensive than an autocracy working itself into a frenzy. If a lean and thin patient becomes mad, he makes it impossible for the neighbors to sleep and the whole neighborhood gets caught in that ordeal. You just try to imagine that when humankind becomes mad, when the syrup of civilization goes bad, and when humanity becomes ill-disposed, then what is the solution for that!

In the Age of Ignorance, civilization had not only deteriorated, it had begun to stink, worms had developed in it, man had become a hunter of mankind, he had begun to derive such pleasure in the agonies of some human being's death, the toss and turn of the injured, and in the groans of the anguished, which he did not find in wine and glasses, the most savory of the savory meals and in beautiful surroundings. You study the history of Rome, whose victories, order and discipline, legislation and civilization became world famous. European historians write about it:

> For the people of Rome the most interesting, delightful and enthralling scene used to be when in duels or fights with wild animals the defeated and wounded gladiator went into pangs of death and while in the throes of death took his last gasp. At that moment the cheerful and lively spectators of Rome used to fall over each other to catch a glimpse of that splendid scene and it became impossible even for the police to keep them under control.[67]

Gladiatorial combats of the Roman period, in which a human being was compelled to fight animals, present the worst example of human villainy and cruelty. However, it was the favorite amusement of only those who belonged to the upper class. Lecky, the author of *History of European*

67. History of European Morals; Lecky

Morals, describing the popularity of these games writes:

> This popularity and fascination for gladiatorial combats was not at all surprising because as regards the number of charming scenes that had accumulated in it, no other sport had as many. A lonely arena, aristocrats and dignitaries, dresses of glittering wealth, a huge crowd of spectators, the effect of their fervor infective, in such a large gathering the stillness and silence for the expected, eighty thousand people would raise an applause in unison whose echo thundered – why just across the city – even in the suburbs of the city, the way the complexion of the battle changed minute by minute, the display of unprecedented courage and daring; each of these things is enough to grip human imagination and their collective power is naturally very strong.
>
> Orders were issued to stop these atrocious entertainments, but this flood was so powerful that no dam could stop it.[68]

Hence, the real predicament of the Age of Ignorance was that the joint of the entire life had got dislocated, rather had got broken; human beings had not remained human beings, the case of humanity had been put up in God's Court in its last stage, man had given evidence against himself already; in this backdrop God conferred apostleship on *Sayyadna* Muhammad ﷺ and said:

And We have not sent thee [O Muhammad]
except as a mercy unto the worlds.[69]

The truth is that, the account of *Sayyadna* Muhammad's ﷺ apostleship, his *invitation* to faith and praiseworthy endeavors extends to the present period, rather the entire period up to the Day of Resurrection. The first thing he ﷺ did was that, the sword which was hanging over the head of humankind and could have fallen any moment on its head to make short work of it, he ﷺ

68. *Taareekh-e-Akhlaq-e-Europe*; page 230, Translation: Maulana Abdul Majid Daryabadi, may Allah have mercy on him. **69.** V.107, chapter 21, *Ambiyaa',* Daryabadi Quran Translation; Abdul Majid Daryabadi. **NB:** 'Worlds' refers to *this world* and the next i.e.`*the Hereafter*, it has also been described as *the spiritual world* and *the physical world.*

removed that sword, and showered it with those gifts which granted to it a new life, new courage, new strength, new honor and a new destination, and by their blessings began a new period of humanity, civilization and urbanization, knowledge and skill, purity and cleanliness, spirituality and the building of humanity. We dwell here upon those few gifts of the beloved apostle ﷺ, which played a fundamental and leading role in the guidance and reform of humankind, and in the building and progress of humanity, and thanks to which a new world came into existence.

THE GREATEST FAVOR OF THE BELOVED PROPHET ﷺ, is that he ﷺ gave to the world the blessing of Belief in the Oneness of God, a tenet more revolutionary, life-giving, time-honored and miraculous, neither the world had ever received before nor can it ever receive till the Day of Resurrection. This human being, whose claims in poetry, philosophy and politics are tall and lofty, and who enslaved nations and countries again and again, wielded his authority over the four elements, made flowers blossom in rock, and chiseled the hearts of mountains to make rivers flow, and who at times made claims of divinity even; he used to bow before things that were more helpless and base than himself, devoid of sense and movement, lifeless and dead, and were sometimes figments of his own imagination. He used to fear them and beg before them. He used to prostrate not only before mountains, rivers, trees, animals, ghosts and devils, and natural phenomena, but before insects and reptiles even; and all his life was spent in these very hopes and fears connected with them and amidst these very perils, whose result was cowardice, mental confusion, superstitious beliefs and lack of confidence. The beloved apostle ﷺ taught him such a pure, unadulterated, easy to comprehend, and life-giving tenet of Belief in the Oneness of God through which, except for the God who is the Creator of the universe, he became fearless and unperturbed, and detached from everyone. A new strength, new courage, and new valor developed in him. A new unity was born, he began to regard God alone to be the real Accomplisher, the Absolute who fulfills all needs, and who causes beneficence and distress. With this new discovery and finding, his world changed, he became safe from every type of slavery and servitude and every kind of irrational fear and hope, and every sort of discord and confusion. He began to see unity in diversity. He began

to consider himself superior to all creations, the head and organizer of the whole world, and an obedient subject of God alone. Its inevitable result was the reinstitution of greatness and honor of humanity, with which the entire world had become totally deprived.

After the apostleship of *Sayyadna* Muhammad ﷺ, the echo of this tenet of *Belief in the Oneness of God* began reflecting from all directions [previously though there was no tenet more unknown and cruelly treated than it]. All philosophies, ideas and thoughts of the world were more or less influenced by it. Those main and major religions in whose vein and fiber polytheism [faith on multiple gods and deities] had got markedly ingrained, felt compelled to announce in one tune or the other that: God is One. They felt compelled to reinterpret their faiths of associating partners with God and began explaining them so philosophically that the accusation of associating partners with God and the worship of innovations may not be leveled against them, and their faith appeared to have some similarity or the other with the Islamic tenet of Belief in the Oneness of God. In the acceptance of *Shirk* they began to feel shy and hesitant; and all *shirk* based systems, ideas and faiths got into an inferiority complex. A tremendous favor of that great benefactor, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, is that he ﷺ gave the blessing of *Tawheed* to the world.

THE SECOND REVOLUTIONARY AND TREMENDOUS FAVOR OF THE BELOVED APOSTLE OF ALLAH ﷺ is the concept of human unity which he ﷺ had given to the world. Man was divided into nations and brotherhoods, caste, *jaati*, and upper and lower classes, and the difference between them was like that of human beings and animals, masters and slaves, deities and devotees. There was no concept of unity and equality. After centuries, the beloved apostle of Allah ﷺ, made this revolutionary and astonishing proclamation for the first time:

> O people! Your Cherisher and Sustainer is One, and your father is also one. All of you are the progeny of Adam, and Adam was created from clay. Verily the most honored of you in the sight of Allah is [he who is] the most righteous of you.

No Arab has superiority over a non-Arab except on
the basis of righteousness.[70]

These are words that the apostle of Allah ﷺ had spoken, in his last Haj, to a grand congregation of 125,000. Two unities have been announced in them, and these are the only two natural, strong and eternal foundation structures upon which the beautiful palace of genuine unity of the human race can be built. And under whose shade man can find shelter and peace. And he can complete the work of the reconstruction of humanity on principles of collaboration and cooperation. What are these two unities? One, unity of humankind's Creator and Fashioner; and one, the unity of the human race's founder and ancestor. Thus every human being has a dual relationship with another human being, one spiritual and actual: that the Cherisher and Sustainer of all human beings and worlds is One; the second, physical and secondary: that all human beings are the progeny of one father.[71] In other words, he ﷺ gave the teaching of *Tawheed-e Rab* [Belief in the Oneness of Cherisher and Sustainer] and *Tawheed-e Ab* [Belief in the oneness of father] which can be rephrased in short as *Ar-Rab Wahid wal Ab wahid*: Just as the Cherisher and Sustainer is One, the father too is one.

At the time when this announcement was made, the world was not in the frame of mind to listen to it. This announcement was no less than an earthquake in the world of those days. Certain things are such that in steps they become bearable; the very same is the case with electricity, that we touch it by placing it behind veils of insulation but if somebody makes contact with an un-insulated wave of electricity its current runs through his body and makes short work of him. Today, through the *invitation* of Islam, the establishment of Islamic society, and the efforts of reformers and missionaries of Islam, the stages of knowledge, understanding, and human thought which have been crossed, they have made that revolutionary and earth shaking announcement an everyday reality. Starting from the platform of the United Nations which declared the Human Rights Charter, announcements of human rights and human equality are being issued by every democracy and administration, and nobody is surprised to hear them.

70. *Kanz-ul A'maal.* **71.** In the explanation of this point which was mentioned, in passing, in a speech, material has been drawn from the author's work *Arkaan-e-Arbaa'* (Urdu).

However, there was a time when the super-human status of many nations and dynasties was an established tenet, and the genealogy of many nations and families was being joined with God, with the sun and the moon. The Noble Quran has quoted the Jews and the Christians as saying that we are like, the loved and liked children of God.

[Both] the Jews and the Christians say:
we are sons of Allah and [are] His beloved[72]

The Pharaohs of Egypt used to call themselves incarnates of the Sun god, in India *Sooryavanshi* and *Chandravanshi*[73] families were present, the Iranian kings whose title used to be Khusro, claimed that divine blood ran in their veins, and people of Iran used to hold them in this very light, their belief was that in the make-up of these born kings some sacred heavenly ingredient is included. The name of the last Iranian Emperor, Yazdgird[74], of the Kiyaani dynasty tells us that to what degree he and the Iranians used to regard him close to and a companion of God.

The Chinese used to think that their Emperor was the son of the sky, their belief was that the sky is masculine and the earth feminine and through their contact has come about the creation of the universe, and the Emperor is the first born son of this couple[75]. The Arabs, except for themselves, used to call the whole world *'ajam* i.e. dumb and speechless; their most distinguished tribe, *the Quraish*, used to consider themselves even more exalted and superior to the common Arabs and in this superiority complex used to maintain their individuality even in the homogenous congregation of Haj[76]. In this atmosphere and this environment the Quran proclaimed:

O mankind! We created you from a single [pair] of a male and female, and made you into nations and tribes that ye may know each other [not that ye may despise each other] verily the most honorable among you is [he who is] the most righteous of you.[77]

72. V.18, C.5, *Al Maidah*; the Quran; Translation: A. Y. Ali. **73.** Descendants of the Sun dynasty and the Moon dynasty. **74.** *Yazd* [Persian]: God the Exalted; *Gird* [Persian]: in the proximity of; close to. **75.** History of China; James Carcon. **76.** Please refer to books on the Traditions and the beloved prophet's Biography. **77.** V.13, C.49, *Al Hujraat*, the Quran; Translation: A.Y. Ali.

And in such a chapter of the Quran which is the Preface [*Al Faatihah*: The Opening] of Quran and its most recited chapter, it has been said:

Praise be to Allah,
the Cherisher and Sustainer of the worlds.

THE THIRD MANIFESTAION OF THE BELOVED APOSTLE OF ALLAH ﷺ BEING A MERCY FOR THE WORLDS and his third tremendous favor upon humankind, is that Islamic idea of respect for humanity and the worth and value of man, which is his blessing and a gift of Islam. At the time of the advent of Islam, nobody was more disgraced than man, human existence was reduced to being totally worthless and immaterial. At times, pets, certain 'sacred' animals, certain trees with which certain beliefs and legends had got associated, were considered any day more valuable, respectable and deserving of conservation than man, for their sake human lives could be taken unceremoniously, and the blood and flesh of human beings could be made offering to them. Even today its examples can be seen in some major and leading developed countries. The apostle of Allah *Sayyadna* Muhammad, ﷺ, impressed upon the minds and hearts of people the fact that man is an existence most valuable, respectable, lovable and deserving of protection in this universe; he ﷺ raised the status of a human being so high that there only remained the Being of the Creator of the universe beyond that. The Quran announced that he is *Khalifatullah* [God's deputy], the whole world and this entire workshop on earth has been created for him only, **It is He Who hath created for you all things that are on earth,**[78] he is the most eminent of the created beings and the chairman of this global gathering:

We have honored the sons of Adam; provided them with transport on land and sea; given them for sustenance things good and pure; and conferred on them special favors, above a great part of Our creation[79]

More than this how else can he be honored and his importance be

78. V.29, chapter 2, *Al Baqrah*. The Meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Y Ali. **79.** V.70, chapter 17, *Al Israa'*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

acknowledged that it has been clearly said: Human beings are the clan of God and the most favorite to God among His slaves is he who behaves well with His clan and provides it with comfort.[80]

What can express more the high stature of humanity and its nearness to and special relationship with God than that which appears in a Sacred Tradition.[81] The beloved prophet ﷺ, said that: On the Day of Judgment Allah the Exalted will say to His bondsman that, O son of Adam, I fell ill and you visited Me not. He will say: O Lord, and how should I visit You when You are The Lord of the worlds? He will say: Did you not know that my servant so-and-so had fallen ill and you visited him not? Did you not know that had you visited him you would have found Me with him? O son of Adam, I asked you for food and you fed Me not. He will say: O Lord, and how should I feed You when You are The Lord of the worlds? He will say: Did you not know that My servant so-and-so asked you for food and you fed him not? Did you not know that had you fed him you would surely have found that [i.e. the reward for so doing] with Me? O son of Adam, I asked you to give Me water to drink and you gave Me not. He will say: O Lord how should I give You water to drink when You are The Lord of the worlds? He will say: My servant so-and-so asked you to give him water to drink and you did not give him water. Had you given him water to drink you would have surely found that [i.e. the reward for so doing] with Me.[82]

Is it possible to find beyond this in a religion that is entirely about God's Oneness, any admission and proclamation of the high stature of humanity, of the eminence of man and about his being beloved to God? And in any religion and philosophy of the world has this station been given to man? For earning the mercy and affection of God, the beloved prophet ﷺ, has declared

80. Mishkaat; on the authority of Beheqee. **81.** While the Holy Quran is the revealed word of God, the Traditions are a record of the words and deeds of the beloved prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. Revelations of Allah the Exalted to the beloved prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, that were not meant for inclusion in the Holy Quran but which the beloved prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, narrated to his companions are called **Sacred Traditions**. **82**. Related in Sahih Muslim [Translation adapted with slight modification from: Forty Hadith Qudsi, Selected and translated by: Ezzeddin Ibrahim & Denys Johnson-Davies (Abdul Wadoud); pages 88-90].

mercy and affection on human beings as a prerequisite and the biggest means for it. And said:

The Compassionate[83] showers Mercy upon those who are merciful, if you will show mercy towards the dwellers of the earth then He Who is in the Heavens, He will cause Mercy to descend upon you.[84]

You imagine, that when this whole exercise of impressing human unity upon the hearts, and creating conviction about mankind's honor in the hearts had not been done, at that time, what must have been the condition of man? The price of a petty desire of one man was higher than thousands of people. Kings used to rise and wipe out countries after countries. Alexander rose and the way somebody plays *Kabaddi*[85], came up to India and extinguished the lamps of nations and civilizations. Caesar rose and began hunting down humans the way somebody goes hunting for wild animals. In our times also two World Wars took place, which put hundreds of thousands of people to death; and this was a result of nothing else except national arrogance, political egoism, greed for power or the urge to overrun markets of international trade. Iqbal spoke the truth:

Abhi tak aadmi saed-e-zaboon-e-shaharyari hai
Qayamat hai ke insaan nau'-e-insaan ka shikari hai

Still in the ruler's hunting ground a prey injured is man,
it's an apocalypse that: mankind is game for man!

THE FOURTH REVOLUTIONARY ACCOMPLISHMENT: At the time of the

83. *The Compassionate*, is one of the 99 Attributes and names of Allah. Allah is the hundredth and His actual name. **Say: He is Allah, The One and only.** [Verse 1, Chapter 112, Holy Quran; Translation: Abdullah Yusuf Ali; in this verse also, *The One* is an Attribute]. **84.** Abu Da'ood. NB: The great Urdu poet, Hali has translated this Tradition as follows:

Karo meherbani tum ahl-e-zameen par;
Khuda meherbaan hoga 'arsh-e-bareen par.

85. An Indian sport played on a rectangular sand court between two teams of seven players each. One player steps into the other side and sometimes goes quite deep to capture a player by touching him, holding his breath throughout and saying *Kabaddi*. . *Kabaddi*. . *Kabaddi*. .

conferment of apostleship upon *Sayyadna* Muhammad ﷺ, the prevalent atmosphere that overshadowed most individuals of the humankind was one of suspicion about the inherent nature of man and disappointment with the mercy of God. In the creation of this mental frame, certain ancient religions of Asia and the changed Christianity of the Middle East and Europe had played one and the same role. Ancient religions of India through the philosophy of transmigration[86], *Aava Gavan*, in which the intention and power of man has got absolutely no say, and according to which it is necessary for every human being to bear the punishment for acts and mistakes of his previous birth, and Christianity as a result of its tenet of man being a born sinner and the necessity of *Sayyaddna* E'isa [the blessed prophet, Jesus Christ], peace be upon him, to have become an atonement for his sins, had driven hundreds of thousands and tens of millions of individuals of the civilized world of that time, who were followers of these religions, to distrust about their own being, and to despair with their future and the mercy of God.

The apostle of Allah *Sayyadna* Muhammad ﷺ, announced with full force and clarity that the nature of man is like a clean slate, upon which there is no pre-existent writing; better and yet better compositions can be written on it; man himself begins his life and with his own good or bad deeds, builds or spoils his world and `the Hereafter; and he is not responsible or answerable for anybody else's acts. The Glorious Quran announced again and again that in the Hereafter no one will be able to carry anybody else's burden, and that in his share, his very effort and its results are going to come, the result of a human being's effort will certainly become manifest and he will be fully requited for it.

that no bearer of burdens can bear the burden of another; that man can have nothing but what he aspires for; that [the fruit of] his striving will soon come in sight; then will he be rewarded with a reward complete . .[87]

Through this announcement was restored that confidence of man, upon his own inherent nature and his own natural capabilities, which had been badly

86. The passing of a person's soul after his/her death into another body. **87.** Verse 38-41, chapter 53, *An-Najm*, The Meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

shaken. He actively set out upon his journey with a new resolve and conviction, and a new zeal and enthusiasm, so he may burnish his destiny as also the destiny of humanity, and try his luck and test his strengths.

The apostle of Allah *Sayyadna* Muhammad ﷺ, declared sins, slip-ups and mistakes to be temporary conditions, in which sometimes man gets involved due to his ignorance, short-sightedness and incitements of the psyche and the devil. Self-improvement, a liking for virtue, admission of fault and repentance, is the real demand of his nature and the mettle of humanity. To admit one's mistake, to repent over it, to weep and cry before God and get that fault forgiven, and to resolve that one would never make such a mistake again, is the nobility of man and the legacy of Adam.[88] The beloved prophet ﷺ, opened such a door of repentance before the frustrated and broken-hearted human beings sunk neck-deep in the swamp of sins, and publicized it so forcefully, that it will be right to call him the one who brought this discipline back to life. For this very reason, among the names of the beloved prophet ﷺ, one name is also *Nabi at-Tawbah* [the Prophet who taught repentance and gave its glad tidings]. The beloved prophet, ﷺ, did not present repentance as a spin-off of helplessness and as an atonement for unobserved commandments, rather he ﷺ stated such virtues in it and kept raising its rank to such a level that it became a top class worship, and such a means of attaining nearness to God and being lovable to Him, that highly innocent and sinless worshippers and ascetics began to get envious about it.

The Glorious Quran stated the possibility of a sinful man to repent before the extensiveness of Divine Mercy and get purified and cleansed of the evilest of the evil sins in such a charming and kind manner, and its instruction to sinful slaves and human beings injured by the machinations of the self and the Satan that they take refuge in the fold of God's Mercy it proclaimed to the beat of the drum in such a way, and stated the rage and storm of His river of mercy in such a style, that one began to feel that more than The Beloved, He is The Lover, and in the interest of those sinful slaves is not only The Forbearing and The Merciful, The Benevolent and The Generous, but He is [if it is right to say] waiting and longing for them and has Judged their true worth. Please read the following words of the Glorious Quran and try to

88. Prophet *Sayyadna* Adam, peace be upon him; the first of mankind.

estimate that Kindness and Affection which drips from each and every word in it.

Say: O My servants who have transgressed against their souls! Despair not of the Mercy of Allah: for Allah forgives all sins for He is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.[88]

In another verse while referring to those who repent for their sins, not in the discussion and context of sinful and erring human beings, instead amidst discussion and in the context of human beings who are highly courageous, righteous and destined for Heaven, it was said:

Be quick in the race for forgiveness from your Lord,
and for a Garden whose width is
that [of the whole] of the heavens and the earth
prepared for the righteous –

those who spend [freely], whether in prosperity or in adversity;
who restrain anger, and pardon [all] men –
for Allah loves those who do good –

And those who, having done something to be ashamed of or wronged their own souls, earnestly bring Allah to mind and
ask for forgiveness for their sins –
And who can forgive sins except Allah? – and are never obstinate in persisting knowingly in [the wrong] they have done.

For such the reward is forgiveness from their Lord,
and Gardens with rivers flowing underneath – an eternal dwelling:

88. V.53, C.39, *Az-Zumar*; The Meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Y Ali.

How excellent a recompense for those who work [and strive]![89]

Exceeding even this is:

God, the Most Merciful, is discussing various categories of His practicing and well-behaved slaves; instead of the worshippers and the ascetics, He inaugurates this glowing list by 'The Repentant'! This verse appears in such a chapter of the Glorious Quran whose title itself is *At-Tawbah* i.e. *The Repentance*.

Those that turn [to Allah] in repentance;
that serve Him, and praise Him,
that wander in devotion to the Cause of Allah;
that bow down and prostrate themselves in prayer,
that enjoin good and forbid evil;
and observe the limits set by Allah – [these do rejoice].
So proclaim the glad tidings to the believers.[90]

Honor and demonstration of trust:

A shining example of this honor and demonstration of trust is that when Allah the Most Merciful announced through the wording of the Glorious Quran, the acceptance of repentance of those three Companions[91], may Allah be pleased with them, who on the critical and important occasion of the Battle of Tabuk [participation in which was extremely necessary] had made a grave mistake by staying back in Madinah without any valid reason; then before mentioning them, mention was made of the Apostle of Allah himself ﷺ and of those Muhajirs and Ansar who had not made any mistake at that time, so that those three who had lagged behind did not feel isolated and lowly, and they were acquitted of every stigma of ridicule and inferiority complex, and upon them and all readers of the Glorious Quran till the Day of Resurrection the fact became clear that their real place and their real group are these very *Sadiqeen Awwaleen* [the first of the truthful] and front

89. V.133-136, C.3, *Aal-e-Imran*, The Meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Y Ali. **90.** V.112, C.9, *At-Tawbah*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali. **91.** For details please refer to literature on the biography of the beloved prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, literature on the exegesis of the Holy Quran and the Traditions; the event of the Battle of Tabuk.

ranking people of the Muhajireen and Ansar. A subtler and finer example of the acceptance of repentance, acceptability of the repentant and psychological kindness and remedy formulation, is difficult to find in the history of creeds and religions, ethics and psychology. In this very chapter, *At-Tawbah*, God has said:

Allah turned with favor to the Prophet, the Muhajirs, and the Ansar[92] **– who followed him in a time of distress, after that the hearts of a part of them had nearly swerved [from duty]; but He turned to them [also]: for He is unto them Most Kind, Most Merciful.**

[He turned in mercy also] to the three who were left behind; [they felt guilty] to such a degree that the earth seemed constrained to them, for all its spaciousness, and their [very] souls seemed straitened to them – and they perceived that there is no fleeing from Allah [and no refuge] but to Himself. Then He turned to them, that they might repent: For Allah is Oft-returning, Most Merciful.[93]

Apart from this, by way of principle it was announced that the Mercy of God overwhelms everything and dominates over His wrath and awe-inspiring Attributes. The Glorious Quran contains: **But My Mercy extendeth to all things.**[94]

And a Sacred Tradition contains: My Mercy is dominant over My Wrath.

Then, He has declared despair also as being synonymous with *Kufr*, *ignorance* and waywardness. In the Glorious Quran, an incontrovertible apostle of God [*Sayyadna* Yaqoob, peace be upon him] is quoted as saying:

Truly no one despairs of Allah's soothing mercy,
except those who have no faith.[95]

92. The Muhajirs were the people of Makkah who had emigrated to Madinah when the practice of Islam and their survival in Makkah had become impossible. The Ansar were the people of Madinah who had received the beloved prophet *Sayyadna* Muhammad, peace & blessings of Allah be upon him, and the Muhajirs with heart-felt love and great honor. **93.** V.117-118, C.9, *At-Tawbah*; **94.** V.156, C.7, *Al A'raaf*; **95.** V.87, C.12, *Yusuf*; The Holy Quran; A. Yusuf Ali.

At another place, another illustrious apostle of God [*Sayyadna* Ibrahim, peace be upon him] has been quoted as saying:

And who despairs of the mercy of his Lord, but such as go astray?[96]

In this manner the apostle of Allah ﷺ, by announcing and popularizing:

- ✓ the virtues and inducements of repentance and
- ✓ the extensiveness and the all-inclusive quality of God's Mercy,

among masses stricken by despair and pessimism, and frightened and scared by announcements and details of the wrath and awe-inspiring Attributes of God [in which a key role was played by Jewish scholars, commentators of sacred scriptures, and the exaggerating and nature hostile Christian ascetics and priests of the middle ages], gave to humanity the message of a new life, blew a new soul in its lifeless body and spiritless heart, applied ointment to its wounds, lifted it from dust and disgrace, and led it to the crest of respect, honor, self-confidence and confidence in God.

THE FIFTH HIGHLY VALUABLE GIFT AND A TREMENDOUS FAVOR, TOO PROMINENT TO IGNORE, OF THE APOSTLESHIP OF *SAYYADNA* MUHAMMAD ﷺ is the idea of the unity of *world and religion* and the revolutionary teaching that this is no real difference, but merely a difference of terminology and to use the time-worn idiom is 'a contradiction in terms'. Actions and morals of man and the results they produce actually depend on man's frame of mind, stimulants of action and its purpose, which in the terminology of the religion and Divine Law of Islam is expressed by a single and plain but extremely extensive and deep term *Niyat*, i.e. intention, which neither knows any such thing as 'world' nor any such thing as 'religion'; with the sentiment and intention of longing for God's pleasure, sincerity, and compliance to His commandment, the biggest of the big worldly act, to the extent that, government, war, utilization of worldly blessings, fulfillment of physical demands, struggle for livelihood, to arrange for permissible amusement, married life and family life, everything transforms into worship

96. V.56, chapter 15, *Al Hijr*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

of a high quality, a means to attain nearness to God, an intercessor for ascending to the highest of the high levels of that nearness, and *pure religion*. On the contrary, the biggest of the big acts of worship and religious endeavor – to the extent that, obligatory acts of worship, emigration for Allah's sake and striving in the cause of Allah, sacrifice and gallantry, and chant and glorification – which happens to be devoid of the aim of seeking God's pleasure and the sentiment of obedience will be considered *pure world* and such a deed on which there is no reward and recompense.

Ancient religions had divided life into two compartments [the world and the Hereafter] and had split the world into two camps, religious people and worldly people, who were not only segregated from each other and a thick border line and a wide gulf existed between them, instead both these compartments collided and both these camps clashed with each other. In their opinion, between the world and religion was an open contrast and an intense rivalry, whosoever had to build friendly relations with anyone of them, it was necessary for him to sever relations and declare war on the other. No human being could take both these boats at the same time. Economic struggle without negligence and ignoring God, rule and realm without overlooking religious and moral teachings, and being free of the fear of God; and to be faithful without renouncing the world, was in no way imaginable. Obviously, man, by and large, happens to like ease and is hedonistic; such a conception of religion that happens to have no room for acquiring any permissible worldly gain, progress, eminence, power and rule, is not acceptable and tolerable for a majority of human beings. Its aftermath was that the majority of civilized, intelligent, capable and active people of the world elected 'the world' instead of 'the Hereafter' for itself and made itself feel reconciled to and satisfied with it. After being disappointed with every type of religious progress, this majority got busy with acquiring the world and in its development. Taking this contrast between 'the world' and 'the Hereafter' for a religious and universal truth, various classes of human beings and humanist organizations, in general, bid farewell to religion. Politics and the State rebelled against the representative of religion, the Church, and freed itself from every restriction it had imposed. Man became nothing more than 'an unchained elephant' and society 'a camel without a rider'. This duality of religion and world and this rivalry between religious people

and worldly people, not only weakened and restricted the effect of religion and morals, and deprived human life and human society of its blessedness and mercy, on the contrary, it opened the door to such atheism and irreligiousness, whose first prey was Europe, then were affected the other nations of the world, who came under the influence of Europe's intellectual, operational or political authority, somewhere more, somewhere less. The state of affairs of the present day world in which the decline of religion and morals has reached its nadir, and selfishness [in its broad sense] has climbed to its zenith, is the result of this very divide between the world and religion.

It is an absolutely tremendous miracle of the apostle of Allah *Sayyadna* Muhammad ﷺ, an absolutely tremendous gift for humanity and a manifestation of his being a mercy for the worlds that he ﷺ is in every respect an apostle of unity and at once the *Basheer* and *Nazeer.*[97] After putting an end to the theory of the contrast of world and religion, he ﷺ changed the whole life into worship and the entire face of the earth into a place of worship, pulled human beings of this world out of warring camps and posted them at only one frontline of good deeds, service to humanity and the earning of God's pleasure. Here saints in worldly dresses, fakirs and ascetics in regal robes, composites of sword and rosary, and worshippers by night and cavaliers during the day will be seen and they will feel no contrast of any sort in it.

THE SIXTH REVOLUTION is that prior to the apostleship of *Sayyadna* Muhammad ﷺ, man was unaware of his final destination. He had no recollection of where he has to go? What is the real field of his capabilities and the real target of his efforts? Man had invented some imaginary destinations and some small and modest circles for his endeavors, in these the intellect and working potential of people was being spent. To become a successful and big man only meant, that I become wealthy, acquire power and become a ruler, my rule and sovereignty must be established over the vastest of the vast territories on earth and the largest of the large human populations. Hundreds of thousands of human beings were such whose

97. Both are appellations of the Apostle, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. *Basheer*: One who gives glad tidings of Paradise. *Nazeer*: One who warns of the torment of Hell Fire.

flight of imagination failed to rise above carvings and paintings, color and harmony, taste and delicacy, and the emulation of the nightingale and the peacock or the quadruped and the cattle. Thousands of human beings were such whose entire intellect was being spent in the servility and flattery of the wealthy and the powerful, the court and the courtiers of their time or in enjoying aimless prose and poetry. The apostle of Allah *Sayyadna* Muhammad ﷺ brought into sharp focus before humankind its Real Destination. He ﷺ engraved upon the heart that the right mystic knowledge about the Creator of the universe, the right knowledge about His Being and Attributes, and His Omnipotence and Wisdom, enquiry into the expansiveness, greatness and limitlessness of the dominion of the heavens and the earth, attainment of belief and conviction, love for God and being lovable to Him, to please Him and yield to Him, the quest and the discovery of unity in this diversity, is the real felicity for man and the pinnacle of his good sense. To develop one's hidden potentials, to get enriched by the wealth of belief and conviction, to earn the pleasure of God through selflessness, sacrifice and service to humanity, and to reach up to those exalted echelons of progress and excellence where even the angels cannot reach, is the real field of man's efforts.

After the conferment of apostleship upon *Sayyadna* Muhammad ﷺ, the climate of the world changed, dispositions of human beings changed, the flame of love for God leapt in the hearts, to search for God became a common taste, human beings developed a new fad [to please God, introduce God's creation to God and deliver benefits to it], the way that in springtime and rainy season there develops vegetation on earth, resilience in dry branches, greenery in leaves, buds sprout from plants, and vines spread over arches and walls, likewise after the Apostleship of *Sayyadna* Muhammad ﷺ, hearts were seized by a new warmth, intellects by a new sentiment and heads by a new love, tens of millions of people set out in search of and to reach their Real Destination, in every country and every people this very drunkenness of dispositions, and in every class this very spirit to excel each other in this field is seen to lash. The Arab region and the non-Arab region, Egypt and Syria, Turkistan and Iran, Iraq and Kharasan, North Africa and Spain, and lastly our country India and the archipelago east of India all are seen to be fond of this very wine of love and mad after this very purpose. It

seems as if humanity has suddenly awakened from a long slumber of centuries. If you read literature on history, memoirs etc. you will see that other than to search for God and to recognize God, there was literally no work to do. In city after city, district after district, village after village, a large number of such human beings are seen who even the angels would envy, lost in the love of God, highly courageous, thoroughly devout, inviting people to the Truth, servants of humanity, pro-human and selfless in occupation. They warmed the cold fireplaces of the hearts, fanned the flames of love for God, released rivers of arts and sciences, lit the candles of love and God-consciousness; and created hatred for ignorance, savagery, atrocity and enmity, taught the lesson of equality, consoled human beings shattered by troubles and harassed by society. It appears that like raindrops they have descended on every inch of land and it is impossible to count them.



The real achievement of the prophet-hood of *Sayyadna* Muhammad ﷺ

Our modern civilization and the present intellectual leadership has been an utter failure in character-building and preparing individuals who would assume responsibilities of human society. It can capture solar radiation, it can custom-build safe and high-velocity research equipment for traversing space, it can transport man to the moon and the planets, it can employ atomic power to perform huge and mighty tasks, it can eradicate poverty from the country, it can raise knowledge and skill to their zenith, it can make a whole nation and a country's population literate and educated, in these successes and triumphs that it has achieved there is no room for refusal for anybody. However, it is totally incapable of producing men of virtue and conviction, and this precisely is its biggest failure and misfortune, and for this very reason centuries of endeavors are being wasted and destroyed. The entire human world has fallen prey to despair and confusion, and now it is losing faith in science and knowledge also, the fear is that there does not begin in the world perchance a campaign of violent backlash and a period of rebellion against science and civilization. Corrupt individuals have corrupted even the innocent and the pious, the means and the resources; rather converted them into instruments of corruption and subversion. The ship of modern civilization cannot withstand waves, every plank in it is bored by weevil and eaten by white-ants. By using rotten and weak planks it is not possible to build any good and strong ship. It is a total exaggeration and a vain thought that rotten planks severally are rotten, weak and unreliable but if they are joined together and used to build some ship, then they undergo metamorphosis and they become good ship-building material – highway robbers and thieves severally are highway robbers and thieves but when they form their own association then that is a holy group of guardians and responsible human beings.

Those individuals which the new intellectual leadership has given to the

world, they are devoid of belief and conviction, deprived of human conscience, deprived of moral sense, unfamiliar with the concepts of love and affection, and oblivious about the honor and respect of humanity. Either they are familiar with the philosophy of honor and pleasure, or they are acquainted only with concepts of devotion to a nation and being friends of a homeland. Individuals of this kind and capability, be they the heads of a democracy or officials of a socialist system, can never establish any righteous society, peaceful atmosphere, and a God-fearing and chaste circle of companions, and they can never be relied upon in matters concerning God's creation and the destiny of the human clan. In this world, the most righteous of individuals and the most righteous of societies have been prepared only by prophet-hood; and only that has the capability to change and enliven the hearts, subdue the baser self and make resolute the wavering self, inculcate the love for piety and virtue, and hatred for sin and wickedness, and develop the strength to confront the magical inducements of wealth and riches, country and empire, honor and command, and realm and domination; and those very individuals who possess these abilities can save the world from destruction and the modern civilization from devastation. Prophet-hood did not provide knowledge of science to the world, did not give inventions, neither it claims doing so, nor it is embarrassed and apologetic about it. Its accomplishment lies in that it has given to the world those individuals [a] who can walk the right path themselves and can guide the world along it; and from every good thing can derive benefit themselves and can pass it on to others, [b] who can make optimum utilization of every strength and divine blessing [c] who are familiar with the purpose of their life and know the Creator, and have the capability to benefit from His Being and obtain additional favors from Him. The existence of these very individuals is the real wealth of humanity and having trained them is the real accomplishment of prophet-hood.



The tenet of the Seal of Prophet-hood – a human need

SEAL: When a document is sealed, it is complete, and there can be no further addition. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, closed the long line of messengers, peace be upon them, Allah's teaching is and will be continuous, but there has been and will be no prophet after *Sayyadna* Muhammad ﷺ. The later ages will want thinkers and reformers, not Prophets. This is not an arbitrary matter. It is a decree full of knowledge and wisdom, **'for Allah has full knowledge of all things'**.[98]

The tenet that:

- religion has been perfected
- and the Apostle of Allah, *Sayyadna* Muhammad ﷺ, is the last Apostle of God and the Seal of Prophets,
- and that Islam is the last message of God and a complete system of life,

was a bounty of God and divine bestowal which God dedicated to this *Ummath*.

For this very reason, a Jewish scholar had expressed great envy and wistfulness over it before *Sayyadna* 'Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, and had said that, there is a verse of the Quran that you people keep reading, had it been revealed in the book that we Jews have and had it related to us, then we would have designated the day on which it was revealed as our national festival and a day of celebration. He meant to refer to this very verse: **This day have I perfected your religion for you, completed my favor upon you and have chosen for you Islam as your religion**[99], the third verse of *Suratul Ma'idah* (The Repast), in which the seal of prophet-hood and completion of divine favor has been announced. *Sayyadna* 'Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, did not deny the glory and

98. Explanation of the word 'SEAL' by Abdullah Yusuf Ali. **99.** Translation: Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

greatness of this favor, the importance of this proclamation, he only said that we do not have the need for any new festival and day of celebration, this verse has been revealed on such an occasion which already is a day of grand congregation and worship in Islam. On that occasion two Eids had assembled, the Day of 'Arfah (9th Zul Haj) and Friday[100]. This tenet saved Islam from falling prey to those campaigns and *invitations* to alien concepts that create chaos and tear to pieces the unity of the *Millath*, which had kept raising their heads from time to time in Islam's long history and across the enormously vast area of the Islamic world. It was the beneficence of this very tenet, that Islam remained safe from becoming a plaything for claimants of prophet-hood and tricksters trying to tamper with Islam, who kept appearing in different periods of history and in different corners of the Islamic world; from the encroachment and invasion of those claimants, who wanted to alter its structure and build a new structure, this *Millath* remained safe inside this very fort of 'the Seal of prophet-hood' and it was able to oppose the whole lot of those conspiracies and dangerous attacks – against which any *Ummath* before it, of any prophet, had not remained safe – and the unity and uniformity of its religion and beliefs remained intact for such a long time. Had this tenet and fort not been there, then this single *Ummath* would have been divided into such different and numerous *Ummaths*, out of which every *Ummath* would have had its separate spiritual center, separate fountainhead of knowledge and civilization, each would have had a separate history, each would have had its separate ancestors, religious heads and leaders, each would have had its separate future.

The tenet of 'the Seal of prophet-hood' is, in fact, an honor and distinction for humankind. By implication, it is the announcement of the fact that mankind has come of age, and it has developed enough merit that it receive the last message of God; now the human society has no need for any new revelation, any new heavenly message. This tenet develops the spirit of self-confidence in man, he comes to know that religion has reached its zenith and now the world does not need to go anywhere behind this point.

100. Readers will like to know that Eid-ul-Adha is celebrated on 10th of Zul Haj, and Friday is considered the Eid of the week among Muslims. So on this occasion, both Friday and Saturday were Eids, they had, as if, assembled.

Now the world instead of looking up to the skies for a new revelation, needs to exploit God-given strengths, and on the basis of the fundamental principles of religion and morality that God has revealed for organizing life, turn its gaze towards the earth and towards itself. The tenet of 'the seal of prophet-hood' creates the sentiment of beating a retreat, it shows man the real field and direction of his striving. Suppose the tenet of 'the seal of prophet-hood' be void, then man will remain in a state of eternal suspense and mistrust, instead of looking towards the earth he will, until the end of time, look towards the skies, he will remain eternally dissatisfied and doubtful about his future. Every time, every new person will tell him that until now the garden of humanity and the estate of Adam was incomplete, it is now that foliage and fruits have completed it, and he will be compelled to think that when it had been incomplete until now, then what is the guarantee for future. In this manner, instead of watering it and benefitting from its fruits and flowers, he will keep waiting for a new gardener to bring foliage and fruit to complete it.



The greatest distinctive feature of the Muslim *Ummath**

*Page 51, reference 91

In the capacity of a student of history, rather an author and a person conversant with world history, and then together with this, in the capacity of a missionary also who has traveled and toured a large part of the world and different countries of the world, I wish to put forward some special points before you, such points that will prove to be decisive on this subject.

Allah the Exalted says:

This day have I perfected your religion for you,
completed my favor upon you
and have chosen for you Islam as your religion[99]

In another Bounteous verse, the Evolver, the Exalted, says:

Muhammad is not the father of any of your men but
[he is] the messenger of Allah, and the seal of prophets[100]

Through these verses the wealth that, not this *Ummath*, rather the world has received and the blessing that it has received, the unique religious proposition that was given to it, very few people reflected upon that also. One point is that, by means of these verses was announced the culmination of the prophet-hood of *Sayyadna* Muhammad ﷺ, as he ﷺ is the last of the prophets, the chain of prophet-hood ends upon his blessed being ﷺ, now no prophet will arrive, now no higher class of education and reform has remained at all that there would remain the need for some new prophet, no gap remains for claiming prophet-hood. Allah the Exalted has perfected this religion [Islam] and has completed His favor. After this perfection of religion

99. V.3, chapter 5, *Al Maidah*, [This is the last verse revealed chronologically.] **100.** V.40, chapter 33, *Al Ahzab*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

and the completion of favor, the fact becomes clearly evident that now there has remained neither room for any amendment, addition and alteration in religion and nor any need and necessity for sending any prophet.

That the message below had to be openly and clearly announced while the apostle of Allah ﷺ had not yet departed from this world is a gift and tremendous favor of Allah upon this *Ummath* and His unique religious proposition:

> Prophet-hood has concluded on *Sayyadna* Muhammad ﷺ, God has caused religion and His tremendous favor to reach completion, neither after the apostle of Allah *Sayyadna* Muhammad ﷺ will now arrive any prophet nor after the *Millath-e-Islamiyah* there will be any *Millath*.[101]

From this Divine announcement that was made with absolute clarity in the Glorious Quran, we get plenty of lesson and message. From this announcement we got the concept of inviting mankind to the unity of articles of faith and the unity in acts of worship, and got the concept of inviting mankind to the of unity of time and the unity of place. The first point that becomes clearly apparent from it is that until the Day of Resurrection, now

101. It was such a favor upon which Jewish scholars and intellectuals felt envious and they looked upon Muslims with jealousy. They knew that the earlier religions had already lost their original form and had fallen prey to tampering as they were devoid of this announcement and guarantee. Hence according to a *Sahih* Tradition:

A Jewish scholar said to *Sayyadna* 'Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, that, O *Ameer-ul-Mu'mineen!* You read such a verse in your book that had that verse been revealed upon us, the Jews, in that case, we would have designated that day as a regular festival and a day of celebration. *Sayyadna* 'Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, enquired, 'which verse is that?' The Jew replied, **'This day have I perfected your religion for you, completed my favor upon you'.** Upon this *Sayyadna* 'Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, said that, I very well know that day and clearly remember that hour also when this verse had been revealed upon the apostle of Allah ﷺ. That was a Friday and the evening of the Day of 'Arfah.

[For details please refer to *Mansab-e-Nabuvat aur uske 'Aali Muqaam Hamileen* [Urdu] by the author.]

just as the beliefs of this *Ummath-e-Islamiah*, this *Ummath-e-Muhammadiah*, will remain one, its acts of worship too will remain one. The second point is that in every time and place, in every reign and period, and in every place where Muslims are inhabited, a unity will be noticed there, religious unity.

[A] UNITY OF THE ARTICLES OF FAITH

Unity of the articles of faith is that over the whole period beginning from the apostleship of *Sayyadna* Muhammad ﷺ until the day of Resurrection the articles of faith of this *Ummath* [that calls itself Muslim, revers and obeys the Quran, claims to submit to God] will remain the same. These are:

Belief in the Oneness of God, which will remain total.
Belief on the apostleship of apostles and the prophet-hood of prophets, who Allah had chosen at their respective times and their respective places, for this critical and tremendous work.

And then:

Belief on the last of the apostles, the last of the prophets, *Sayyadna* Muhammad ﷺ after whom will not arrive any prophet now.
Belief on the apostleship of past apostles.
Belief also on the apostleship and prophet-hood of *Sayyadna* Muhammad ﷺ and belief on their being the seal of apostleship and prophet-hood.
And thus, the belief that prophet-hood and apostleship ends upon *Sayyadna* Muhammad ﷺ.
Belief on prophet-hood as also on the seal of prophet-hood that till the day of Resurrection prophet-hood is not to be granted now to anybody.

This is no ordinary or frivolous matter, no *Ummath* in the world received this pre-eminence.

Similarly, together with subscribing to the prophet-hood and apostleship of prophets and apostles, and the acknowledgement of their honor and position, we assert that no *Ummath* of any prophet and apostle happened to

earn this characteristic of having received these unities [that it had the unity of articles of faith also and the unity of acts of worship also] which this *Ummath* has received; this distinction, Allah the Sustainer and Cherisher of the worlds, granted only to the *Ummath* of *Sayyadna* Muhammad ﷺ.

[B] UNITY OF THE ACTS OF WORSHIP

Unity of the acts of worship is that, not the least change will be allowed to come about in the acts of worship, neither in any period nor even in any territory, that, in view of certain conditions obligatory prayers are reduced to three, or some other change is brought about, or the days of fasting are shifted. A joke comes to mind! A respectable personality [I will not name him] who was on a high position said to me that: *Maulana Sahab*, you people observe fasting in such a harsh weather, why do you not observe *Ramzan*[102] in winters? So remember! The acts of worship will remain the same as they were and will be observed in the same manner.

Salah: the same five times a day.

Sawm [fasting]: the same, of the auspicious month of *Ramzan*, neither any difference will come about in this due to summers nor due to winters.

Zakat: in the same manner according to the system and *Nisab*[103] that has been ordained and whose teaching has been given to us.

Haj – exactly the same way – of the *Baitullah Shareef*[104] observing the whole lot of its rites without any change and difference, and the whole lot of its rites will always remain one and the same.

Till the day of Resurrection no change can occur in it and nor any change will be allowed to occur. This particular unity is called the unity of the acts of worship.

102. Ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar. **103.** Minimum capital on which *Zakat* becomes due. **104.** Another name of the Holy Ka’bah.

Announcement of the Seal of Prophet-hood is a guarantee of the safety and continuance of this *Ummath*

NOTE: Certain portions of this writing are transcriptions from audio recordings of talks delivered by the author.

You study history, praise be to Allah, I was able to study history a lot and I also keep facing the need to refer to it constantly in my academic work and work related to the books I author; I have also read authentic books on Judaism and Christianity. You will be able to notice clearly that their entire history is the history of ebbs and flows, the history of highs and lows, the history of east and west, the history of love and conflict, disagreement in the articles of faith, disagreement in the performance of acts of worship; this which I am telling you is not merely because I am a member of the *Ummath* but I am telling you this also in the capacity of one who keeps in touch with subjects of history and religions. You also do a bit of reading, read French literature, read German literature, read English literature, study the history of religions. Those historians who have written the history of religions you will see them, not just admitting, rather, as if, covering their faces with shame, or rather, narrating this reality with much inferiority complex; and you will see that there is no such religion, among religions prior to Islam, that the way its apostle had made announcements and had told things, that religion was practiced for centuries according to the teachings that he had given. Leave alone centuries. Instead, its practice became difficult for even half a century, and even up to decades sometimes.

The history of those religions shows that the announcement of the completion of prophet-hood and of the seal of prophet-hood had not been made there. The historical narrative is silent about it. Even one individual from among the people who believe those religions to be incontrovertible, have firm conviction in them and take pride in them, that too so far as we know, had not made the claim that the prophet and apostle had claimed

that he is a seal on prophet-hood, the last of apostles and the last of the prophets. Nobody did so, nor there was such an announcement made by Allah, the Blessed, the Exalted.

You will read in the histories of the whole lot of those religions, browse with a bit of broadness of vision and with open-mindedness then you will clearly notice, that not only conflict rather a contradiction is found in them. This religion used to say this in the beginning now it is saying this. The heads of this religion if do not say this then at least, for precaution sake, say this. The heads of this religion and spokesmen and its certified scholars first used to say this, now their opinion is not that, it is this; this is worship, no this never was worship it is an innovation; this is proven, no this is not proven it is hypothetical. You will see in the course of your study that in these religions dissimilarity of tenets of faith will be found, dissimilarity of acts of worship will be found, they will keep changing with the time; just as variation over time exists, variation with respect to place too exists. Therefore, you will find crystal clear specimens. Such specimens as: In the orbit and territory of this religion's spread, in what constitutes its world, religious world, something is happening in some part of it, something else in some part. All this was the result of the fact that the announcement of the seal of prophet-hood had not been made there, for those people there was chance and room, possibilities to define 'permissible' and 'not permissible', that they claim whatever they like. Today, in spite of all the world revolutions, political revolutions too, civil upheavals too, and moral revolutions too – these had not happened before the apostleship of *Sayyadna* Muhammad ﷺ, this is a historical evidence, nobody can deny it – with revolutions in science, with progress in the sciences, with scientific researches and with ever new findings and with the hope of obtaining ever new benefits by incorporating alterations and changes in Islam and presenting a new religion and a new faith, why is it so that this which has happened after the apostleship of *Sayyadna* Muhammad ﷺ, this had never happened before? In the capacity of a historian I say that one will find no precedent of it.

Yet, in spite of it, until now this religion is coming down to us unchanged. Belief on past prophets and apostles is still there. Still belief is there on the Supremacy and Omnipotence of Allah the Exalted – that **Verily, when He**

intends a thing, His command is 'Be', and it is![105] – and on the Oneness of His Being, that He only runs the entire world who runs the universe, because this universe is in His very control and in His Omnipotent Hand, **Verily, when He intends a thing, His command is 'Be', and it is!** In spite of all those revolutions and advancements, this is the very thing that up to now continues to remain intact and in accordance with the fundamental and basic articles of faith. I do not talk of those things that somebody created – like you listened to a poem just now – for the sake of some worldly benefit or as a result of some bribe or in connection with some gain, in connection with honor and rank. That sort of a thing absolutely didn't work in religion. Religion, absolutely clean, purged and burnished, is present to this day. And everybody knows that if the intention is not bad and if fear of God is left in any degree, then a Muslim understands the contrast of *Sunnath* and *Bid'at*, that this is a *Sunnath* [practice of the beloved prophet ﷺ] and this is a *Bida't* [innovation in religion], nobody can prove that *Bid'at* is *Sunnath*, nobody can prove that sin and crime is obedience, nobody can prove that *Shirk* is *Tawheed*, no such procedure can be explored to earn the pleasure of Allah that smells of customs and traditions, and involves worldly benefit. What is it a result of? It is the result of the announcement of the successful completion of the work of prophet-hood and the seal of prophet-hood.

Today you travel to the farthest shores of Europe and America, please excuse me for saying so but few people might have had the chance to tour and travel so much as I did, my competence and capacity has no say in it, it is only a mercy and gift of Allah that, at least, take the Islamic world – the non-Islamic world also I have traveled a lot, Europe, America, Africa, all I have seen – in the Islamic world there would hardly be any corner where I have not been, Morocco which is called *Maghrib Aqsa* [the Western most end] in Arabic, and not only up to Morocco I went up to its farthest part and the furthest point there i.e. Wajdah, and then afterwards on the other side up to Tashkent, Bukhara, and also happened to visit Samarkand, offered prayers also over there, visited mausoleums of pious elders, delivered talks also over there, held meetings also with local authorities. Apart from this, there is no country in the Arab world where I did not go, Iraq, Syria, Egypt, Libya, East Jordan, Turkey, the Gulf region, and not only went to these countries, also

105. V.82, chapter 36, *Yaseen*, The meaning of the Holy Quran, Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

moved around from city to city, but could not find any such place where I could spot any difference in the fundamental matters of religion, that the pillars of religion happen to be one here and different there. Also prayed in congregations and by the grace of God also led congregations but for that I was not given any guidebook even, that you are going to lead the prayer, here prayer is not offered as in your country, after *wudu* this-and-this is done and read, one has to stand at this place to make a special supplication, here the wall has to be touched by hand in this manner; here before commencing the prayer one has to say these words, read aloud this line, say something from your side, preach a special type of topic; if there is a grave, one has to bow before it, has to rely on the lifeless for need-fulfillment. How vast this world is, in every place Muslims are inhabited, but one type of prayer is being offered on every side, you go anywhere and see this, Afghanistan, Turkistan, England, Morocco, Egypt, Spain, Russia, China, Japan, go anywhere, go to that side Libya, Algeria, Sudan, see there, you can peacefully offer prayers and can lead prayers also. By the grace of God, I also got this honor and respect but neither anybody felt the necessity to say something nor I felt it necessary to ask anything. At prayer-time it was said, ‘please lead the prayer’ and I led the prayer, after the prayer also nobody raised any objection, faced any difficulty nor felt any deficiency.



All beneficence is of the Seal of Prophet-hood!

This writing is the transcription from an audio recording of a talk delivered by the author.

After all, what is it the result of? It is the result of the seal of prophet-hood, of the completion of the work of prophet-hood, of the perfection of Divine Law. Had this wealth of the Seal of prophet-hood not been there, then *Ummath-e Muhammadiah* would not have received the honor and distinction that it did. I say in clear terms to you as you sit here in such a big Maidan, assembled in large numbers, listening to talks on religion, that *Salah* that we offer, *Sawm** that we observe, *Zakat* that we give, the *Haj* that we perform, all pillars of Islam have remained as they were. How many political revolutions came about and how many hindrances cropped up, how risky it became to travel by sea[106], but the pilgrimage for Haj is coming down the ages as it is, nobody could stop it; great and momentous events unfolded, disturbances took place, but no change came about in it. What massive revolutions came about, governments fell, the atmosphere changed, but the way the Haj was obligatory yesterday today also it is obligatory, even today people are going to the *Baitullah Shareef* in the same manner as they used to go before, rather they are going now in a very large number, nobody could stop it. Political changes came about; in the Holy Hijaz in fact there never was stability in the political system, first there was Turkish rule, before them somebody else was in power, then came the Shareef of Makkah, after him, now Aal-i Sa'ud are the rulers.

Whatever be the administrative and political changes but in the pillars [obligatory acts of worship] of religion there is no change and revolution. No change has come about in the performance of Haj, no obstruction was faced. By the grace of Allah, I have returned just a few days back from *Harmain*

***** *Salah* and *Sawm* are Arabic for *prayer* and *fasting*. **106.** Records indicate that many vessels with pilgrims aboard capsized in the days when air travel was not as popular as it now is.

Shareefain[107] after performing *'Umrah*; the same *Baitullah Shareef* the same *Mataaf*[108], the same *Haram Shareef*[109], the same *Tawaf*[110], the same *Ashwaat*[111], not even an increase in *Ashwaat*; with the passage of time, either there could have been an increase or decrease in *Tawaf* or somebody could have proposed it, or some change could have been brought about in the sequence of *'Umrah* rites, nothing of the sort happened, the way the beloved prophet ﷺ had performed and instructed, in exactly the same way it is going on even today. May God forgive me for it is bold to say, that even if the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, rose and came to the world today, God so willed and it so happened also, if not the Companions, then any greatest of the great Successors and the greatest of the great pious personages [singular: *walee*] and religious elders [singular: *buzurg*] came – from among the Successors, even if *Sayyadna* Hasan Basri, may Allah have mercy on him, or Imam Ali Zainul Abideen, may Allah have mercy on him, *Sayyadna* Saeed bin al-Musaib, may Allah have mercy on him, and *Sayyadna* Owais Qarni, may Allah have mercy on him, came; and from among the pious personages and religious elders even if *Sayyadna* Sheikh Abdulqadir Jeelani, may Allah have mercy on him, and *Sayyadna* Junaid Baghdadi, may Allah have mercy on him, arrived and with them Imam Ghazali, may Allah have mercy on him, and *Sheikh-ul-Islam* Imam Ibn Taimiah, may Allah have mercy on him, also arrived; or else from among the religious elders and spiritual leaders of India *Hazrath* Khwaja Mu'eenuddin Chishti, may Allah have mercy on him, rose from his grave and came, Baba Fareeduddin Ganj Shakar, may Allah have mercy on him, and *Hazrath* Mujaddid Alf Thani, may Allah have mercy on him, and any of the greatest of the great religious elder and Imam arrived – they will not see religion to have changed. They will find religion to be the same as it was in the period of *Sayyadna* Abu Bakr Siddique, may Allah be pleased with him, and *Sayyadna* Farooq-e-'Azam, may Allah be pleased with him, in the period of *Sayyadna* Uthman, may Allah be pleased with him, and *Sayyadna* 'Ali Murtaza, may Allah be pleased with him. Even if they will see certain things to have changed and will discover certain

107. The Grand Mosque in Makkah and the Prophet's Mosque in Madinah. **108.** The open space around the Holy Ka'bah where pilgrims circumambulate. **109.** The Grand Mosque in Makkah that houses the Holy Ka'bah. **110.** Literally, to go around the Holy Ka'bah. However, the rite of *Tawaf* involves circumambulation of the Holy Ka'bah seven times [to go around once is to complete a *Showt*] beginning from the corner of the Holy Ka'bah where the *Hajr-i-Aswad* [Black Stone] is grouted. **111.** *Ashwat* [*Arabic*]: Plural of *Showt* [Arabic].

new things in religion then that is the result of ignorance, of negligence, of selfishness, of devotion to desires; nobody can claim that this very thing is correct. Neither anybody can tamper with the Holy Quran nor can tolerate to hear and see it. Allah the Exalted has clearly and explicitly said:

We have, without doubt, sent down the Message;
And We assuredly guard it [from corruption].[112]



112. V.9, chapter 15, *Al Hijr*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

Whosoever makes any addition to Divine Law commits blasphemy

We should value this blessing and should thank Allah for it, ought to take pride in it, and the *Ummath-e-Islamiah* has all the right to feel proud over the fact that its religion has been perfected. The entire Divine Law is now before us, now no addition remains to be made in this Divine Law, and if anybody has the courage to do so then his blasphemy is directed against the apostle of Allah ﷺ. We have the right to tell any of the Europeans, the British and the follower of any other religion, that any corner and part of the world you go, the same Divine Law will be found which is here, the same commandments will be found that are here, the same obligatory acts of worship will be found which you are seeing here. The timings of *Salah* [prayers] that are here, the same are also at other places, same in London, same in New York, same in Moscow, same in Paris, whatever be the conditions anywhere, be they weather conditions, be they political conditions, whether there are dangers, whether somebody has to travel, be they the hot equatorial regions or be they the cold arctic regions there is no change in them; it is not that *Salah* be reduced from five times to three times or increased from five times to seven times a day because of short or long days, or the *Maghrib prayer* be offered at the time of *'Asr prayer* and *'Asr* at the time of *Zuhr prayer*, nothing of all this, neither it is so anywhere nor it can ever be. Please remember, this is His Benevolence and is the gift of the announcement of the Seal of Prophet-hood.



BELIEF IN THE HEREAFTER

The place where man has to return: Precise information of the Glorious Quran and its arguments

After the knowledge of the Being and Attributes of Allah the Exalted, the next profound knowledge the prophets, peace be upon them, grant to the world – and which definitely cannot be obtained from any other source except them – is the knowledge that man will die and again come back to life and this world will be demolished and re-built. In that second life, man will have to be accountable for his previous lifetime. Whatever he has sown in his worldly life, that he will reap.

Man has no means to acquire this knowledge except through the prophets, peace be upon them. The capabilities of deduction and conclusion that man possesses can neither obtain this knowledge in the first place nor can disprove it. Senses, intellect, experience and besides these man's hidden powers [intrinsic senses like balance, determination], and then out of spirituality and intuition, no power and source is such through which besides the life of this world the existence of some other kind of life and its details can be proved, and nor there is such a possibility that in this life the world of the Hereafter can be observed. All this information pertains to the Unseen and man cannot, on his own, comprehend that which is Unseen; his sciences and his intellect cannot at all help man have access to it; through those sciences and intellect neither can it be proved nor can it be disproved.

Man is left with only two options: either after placing confidence in the prophets and after studying the observations and evidences that establish the truth of their claim, attest their statements or without any scientific proof and evidence reject them.

Say [O Muhammad]:
None in the heavens and the earth knoweth the Unseen save Allah; and they know not when they will be raised [again]. Nay, but doth

their knowledge reach to the Hereafter?
Nay, for they are in doubt concerning it.
Nay, for they cannot see it.[1]

However, as mentioned above, witnesses [verses of the Holy Quran, as they testify to the Hereafter and are manifest proof because they come from that very world] of this approaching reality and the possibilities that it exists we come by in this world and in this life, from which without any intellectual mix-up man can conjecture that this event is by all means possible.

Its one striking parallel and its one witness is the birth and life of man himself. How many stages he has covered from naught to existence and from existence to the completion of his existence. From semen to sperm, from sperm he assumed the form of a clot or a form leech-like, then was formed a small fetal lump with features or without features, then was formed a bony structure, which then was clothed with flesh, then finally he developed into a different creation, then after emerging from the dark confines of the abdomen he spent sometime in the cradle of infancy and childhood. He then stepped in to the verdant Maidan of youth. Then either his next step fell at the threshold of death or he was given so much respite that after having seen that springtime of life, he also saw the autumn of old age and began the return journey of life. In other words, after youth, in old age, once again childish tendencies began to overtake him. His capacities failed one by one, mind and memory left him. Like a child he became, helpless, dependent on the care and concern of others. He began to neglect himself more and more and everything that he had hitherto known so well became unrecognizable for him.

At this juncture ended one leg of his journey but his journey did not, only a transitional stage of the journey arrived which is called death and the world of *barzakh* (partition).

Maut ek maandgi ka waqfah hai
Ya'ni aagey chalenge dam lekar

1. V. 65-66, C.27, *An-Naml*; The meaning of the Glorious Quran; Mohammad M. Pickthall.

Death is the stopover of a tired wayfarer,
that is, will move on after resting a while.

Surely, whosoever knows the original of and the truth of man [dust and water], and then his beginning and his birth, what intellectual hitch can he have in believing the coming back to life after death? And whosoever has observed so many changes in the life of man, what difficulty has he in accepting the possibility of a last change?

The second glaring example of life after death are scenes of the earth's returning to life which keep appearing before our eyes again and again. This earth that holds a trust, in whose bosom are the life-sustaining treasures and belongings of thousands of human beings to be born and beasts that would come to life, itself happens to lie dead. Her lips get dried and parched by the sun, it happens to be an insensitive and lifeless corpse of dust, in which there neither happens to be life nor the life sustaining resource for anything else. However, when drops of the heavenly elixir of life fall on its lips and moistening its throat reach up to its bosom, then that very earth all of a sudden wakes up from her mortal sleep. The energy of life and the beauty of youth runs through her, she, as if, swings, sways and seems intoxicated. Her mouth throws out riches, greenery and a treasure of life. Fragrant vegetation, ripened crops waving in the wind, and worms and insects that crawl out and spread about on the surface of the earth, inform us of the earth's inner life and that it has been blessed with life. During springtime and rainy season this scene of the earth's inner life who, among us, has not seen with his own eyes?

Examples and scenes of life after death can be seen everywhere and everybody can see them but the chance to verify them and imagine life after death is certainly more for such a person who is more conversant with the anatomy of living beings and terrestrial conditions and changes, and who has studied the coming into being and growth of plants and animals. Hence, here and there in the Glorious Quran, Allah the Exalted has presented both these realities for proving life after death and has drawn man's attention towards them. At one place He says:

O Mankind! If ye have a doubt about the Resurrection

[consider] that We Created you out of dust,
then out of sperm,
then out of a leech-like clot,
then out of a morsel of flesh, partly formed and partly unformed,
in order that We may manifest [Our Power] to you;
and We cause whom We will to rest in the wombs for an appointed term,
then do We bring you out as babes,
then [foster you] that ye may reach your age of full strength;
and some of you are called to die,
and some are sent back to the feeblest old age, so that
they know nothing after having known [much],

and [further], thou seest the earth barren and lifeless,
but when We pour down rain on it,
it is stirred [to life], it swells, and it puts forth
every kind of beautiful growth in pairs.

This is so, because Allah is the Reality: it is He Who gives life to the dead,
and it is He Who has Power over all things.
And verily the Hour will come: There can be no doubt about it, or about
[the fact] that Allah will raise up all who are in the graves.[2]

At another place He has said:

Man We did create from a quintessence [of clay]; then We placed him [as a drop of] sperm in a place of rest, firmly fixed; then We made the sperm into a clot of congealed blood; then of that clot We made a [fetus] lump; then We made out of that lump bones and clothed the bones with flesh; then We developed out of it another creature. So blessed be Allah, the Best to create! After that, at length ye will die. Again on the Day of Judgment will ye be raised up.[3]

Earth's inner life and the fact that water is life-giving, the Holy Quran has described in its miraculous words in various places:

2. V. 5-7, chapter 22, *Al Haj*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali. **3.** V. 12-16, chapter 23, *Al Mu'minoon*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

It is Allah Who sends the winds, and they raise the clouds:
then does He spread them in the sky as He wills,
and break them into fragments,
until thou seest raindrops issue from the midst thereof:
then when He has made them reach such of His servants as He wills,
behold, they do rejoice!
Even though, before they received [the rain] – just before this –
they were dumb with despair!
Then contemplate [O man!] the memorials of Allah's mercy!
How He gives life to the earth after its death:
verily the Same will give life to the men who are dead:
for He has power over all things.[4]

It is Allah
Who sends forth the winds, so that they raise up the clouds;
and We drive them to a land that is dead and
revive the earth therewith after its death:
even so [will be] the Resurrection![5]

And of His signs is that thou beholdest the earth lowly,
and when We send down thereon water, it stirreth to life and groweth.
Verily He who quickeneth is the Quickener of the dead.
Verily He is over everything Potent.[6]

And Who sendeth down from the heaven water in measure;
then We quicken a dead land therewith:
even so ye shall be brought forth.[7]

Apart from these two signs and manifest examples, this majestic and sprawling workshop of the universe keeps presenting instances and scenes of life after death, day and night. Here every moment, continually fabricated things keep getting out of order and after being dismantled are fabricated continually. From a thing devoid of life and consciousness is obtained a fit

4. V. 48-50, C.30, , *Ar-Room*; **5.** V. 9, C.35, *Al Mu'minoon*, The Meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali **6.** V.39, C.41, *Ha Mim Sajdah*, **7.** V.11, C.43, *Az-Zukhruf*, Daryabadi Quran Translation; Abdul Majid Daryabadi.

and healthy, hale and hearty living being, and from a fit and healthy living existence, a thing totally lifeless and dead. Contrasting effects and results arise from a lot of substances. In many creatures life building processes and life's degenerative processes keep carrying on simultaneously. Whosoever has studied, however little, about this infinite power of the Creator of the universe, initial stages of the life of creatures, and the extensiveness of genesis and creation, he cannot even for a moment have any doubt about life after death and for him there is absolutely no intellectual hitch to accept it.

See they not how Allah originates creation, then repeats it:
truly that is easy for Allah.
Say: Travel through the earth and see how Allah did originate creation;
so will Allah produce a later creation:
for Allah has power over all things.[8]

It is He Who brings out the living from the dead,
and brings out the dead from the living,
and Who gives life to the earth after it is dead:
and thus shall ye be brought out [from the dead].[9]

For Allah the Exalted to bring into existence a thing from naught, and then to bless it with life again, both are equally easy; but from man's point of view to make something a second time is, at any rate, more easy for him than making it the first time. Therefore, he who has once admitted that the Creator is an attribute of God, for him to admit to the second manifestation of the same attribute, especially when that creation has not even been reduced to naught entirely, is not at all difficult.

It is He Who begins [the process of] creation, then repeats it; and for Him it is most easy. To Him belongs the loftiest similitude [we can think of] in the heavens and the earth;
for He is Exalted in Might, full of Wisdom.[10]

8. V.19-20, chapter 29, *'Ankaboot* **9.** V.19, chapter 30, *Ar-Room*, **10.** V. 27, chapter 30, *Ar-Room*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

Doth not man see that it is We Who created him from sperm?
Yet behold! he [stands forth] as an open adversary!
And he makes comparisons for Us
and forgets his own [origin and] creation:
he says, 'Who can give life to [dry] bones
and decomposed ones [at that]?
Say, He will give them life Who created them for the first time!
For He is well versed in every kind of creation!
The Same Who produces for you fire out of the green tree
when behold! ye kindle therewith [your own fires]!
Is not He Who created the heavens and the earth
able to create the like thereof?
Yea, indeed! for He is the Creator,
Supreme of skill and knowledge [infinite]!
Verily when He intends a thing, His Command is 'Be' and it is!
So glory to Him in Whose Hand is the dominion of all things;
and to Him will ye be all brought back.[11]

And Allah has produced from the earth, growing [gradually],
And in the end He will return you into the earth
And raise you forth [again at the Resurrection][12]

Then, whosoever has seen the manifestation of God's Attributes in this world and who is acquainted with the wonders of His Ability and Wisdom, for him what is so strange in it?

See they not that Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth, and never wearied with their creation, is able to give life to the dead? Yea, verily He has power over all things.[13]

Do they not look at the sky above them?
How we have made it and adorned it, and there are no flaws in it?
And the earth – We have spread it out, and set thereon
mountains standing firm, and

11. V.77-83, chapter 36, *Yasin*, **12.** V.17-18, chapter 71, *Nooh*, **13.** V33, chapter 46, *Al Ahqaaf*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

produced therein every kind of beautiful growth [in pairs] – to be observed
and commemorated by every devotee turning [to Allah].
And We send down rain charged with blessing,
and We produced therewith gardens and grain for harvests;
and tall [and stately] palm trees,
with shoots of fruit stalks, piled one over another –
as sustenance for [Allah's] servants –
and We give new life therewith to land that is dead:
thus will be the Resurrection.[14]

It is We who have Created you: why will ye not witness the Truth? Do ye then see the [human seed] that ye throw out – Is it ye who create it, or are We the Creators? We have decreed death to be your common lot and We are not to be frustrated from changing your forms and from creating you [again] in forms that ye know not. And ye certainly know already the first form of creation: Why then do ye not celebrate His praises? See ye the seed that ye sow in the ground? Is it ye that cause it to grow or are We the Cause?

Were it Our will, We could crumble it to dry powder and ye would be left in wonderment, [Saying] 'We are indeed left with debts [for nothing]: Indeed are we shut out [of the fruits of our labor]'. See ye the water which ye drink? Do you bring it down [in rain] from the cloud or do We?

Were it Our will, We could make it salt [and unpalatable], then why do ye not give thanks? See ye the fire which ye kindle? Is it ye who grow the tree which feeds the fire, or do We grow it?[15]

Does man think that he will be left uncontrolled [without purpose]?
Was he not a drop of sperm emitted [in lowly form]?
Then did he become a clinging clot;
then did [Allah] make and fashion [him] in due proportion
And of him He made two sexes, male and female.
Has not He, [the Same], the power to give life to the dead?[16]

14. V.6-11, chapter 50, *Qaf*, **15.** V.57-72, chapter 56, *Al Waqiah*. **16.** V.36-40, chapter 75, *Al Qiyamah*. The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

By casting a contemplative look on this world and finding this celestial scatter of universe to be a cohesive whole, and its elements, one by one, to be having a reason and serving a purpose, man's heart and his normal intuition by its own bears witness, that there should be a world after this world and a second life after this life, which would be a sequel to this world and life, in which the results of the deeds of this life would become manifest. If such a world and life do not exist then the birth of man is an exercise in futility and all this workshop is purposeless and has no limit to it. For this very reason, Allah the Exalted has addressed the healthy nature of man and has said:

Does man think that
he will be left uncontrolled [without purpose]?[17]

Did ye then think that We had created you in jest,
and that ye would not be brought back to Us [for account]?[18]

About the earth and the skies He said:

Not without purpose did We create heaven and earth and all between![19]

We created not the heavens, the earth, and all between them,
merely in [idle] sport;[20]

By reflecting upon the earth, the sky and their wonders, the conscience of man by itself bears witness to this fact and man by himself acknowledges it.

Behold!
In the creation of the heavens and the earth
And the alternation of night and day – there
are indeed signs for men of understanding –
men who celebrate the praises of Allah, standing,
sitting, and lying down on their sides, and contemplate
the [wonders of] creation in the heavens and the earth [with the thought]:

17. V.36, chapter 75, *Al Qiyamah*. The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali. **18.** V.115, chapter 23, *Al Mu'minoon.* **19.** V.27, chapter 38, *Saad*, **20.** V.38, chapter 44, *Al Dukhan*. The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

Our Lord!
Not for naught hast Thou created [all] this!
Glory to Thee! Give us salvation from the penalty of the Fire.

Our Lord!
Any whom Thou dost admit to the Fire,
truly Thou coverest with shame,
And never will wrongdoers find any helpers![21]



21. V.190-192, chapter 3, *Aal-i-'Imran*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

Characteristics of Belief in the Hereafter

A strong and well-established article of faith is like a perfect and good quality seed, when this seed is sown in the earth of the heart and that earth accepts it, and moreover it is watered and nursed also, then as a result of that, first a fresh seedling appears, then it acquires the form of a tree which covers the entire life under its shade.

Belief in the Hereafter is also a seed that has its own typical characteristics. Once its proper and natural growth reaches completion, then after that, morals and deeds, character and role, speed and speech, nothing stays outside its influence. The difference between the life and character of a believer in the Hereafter and a person who refuses to believe in the Hereafter, happens to be the same as among the flowers, leaves and branches of trees from different seeds. The personality and disposition of a believer in the Hereafter, his rationale, his morals, all happen to be different from a person who refuses to believe in the Hereafter. These are two entirely different molds from which after being cast emerge two entirely different types of mentalities.

Between these two, the fundamental and central difference is that the believer of the Hereafter happens to be desirous of the eternal as opposed to the short-lived, receivable as opposed to cash, eternal joy as opposed to transitory pleasure. The Glorious Quran has made clear this difference again and again in its verses, and has presented its significance also in the same breath. The world it refers by the expression 'quick passing world' and life after death it calls 'the Hereafter', and it allows the freedom of choice between them.

Whosoever intendeth the quick Passing world,
We hasten to him therein whatsoever We please, unto

whomsoever We intend; thereafter We shall appoint for him Hell wherein he shall roast, reproved, rejected. And whosoever intendeth the Hereafter and striveth therefor with due striving, while he is a believer, then those: their striving shall be appreciated.[22]

These are two different types of crops, one crop is that which is sown now and harvested in the Hereafter, the second is that which is instantly sown and instantly harvested. The place where the Glorious Quran has mentioned both harvests there it has kept a very delicate difference, it says, whosoever shall desire the harvest of the Hereafter We shall bestow it with blessings, and whosoever shall desire the harvest of the world We shall grant him from therein. In other words, the result of one will be revealed straightaway and for the result of the other, one will have to wait.

**To any that desires the tilth of the Hereafter,
We give increase in his tilth; and to any that desires the tilth of this world,
We grant somewhat thereof, but he has no share or lot in the Hereafter.**[23]

This mentality of preference for haste and the short-lived, of those who refuse to believe in the Hereafter, has been described in crystal clear terms:

**Nay, [ye men!] but ye love the fleeting life,
and leave alone the Hereafter.**[24]

**As to these, they love the fleeting life,
And put away behind them a Day [that will be] hard.**[25]

Regarding these very people it has been said:

**After them succeeded an [evil] generation:
they inherited the Book, but they chose [for themselves] the vanities of this world. Saying [for excuse]: [Everything] will be forgiven us. [Even so], if similar vanities came their way, they would [again] seize them.**

22. V.18-19, chapter 17, *Al Israa'*, Daryabadi Quran Translation; Abdul Majid Daryabadi **23.** V.20, chapter 42, *Ash-Shoora*, **24.** V.20-21, chapter 75, *Al Qiyamah*. **25.** V.27, chapter 76, *Al Insaan*. The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

Was not the Covenant of the Book taken from them,
that they would not ascribe to Allah anything but the truth?
And they study what is in the Book.
But best for the righteous is the Home of the Hereafter.
Will ye not understand?[26]

Difference also exists in the farthest and ultimate that they both see and desire:

There are men who say:
Our Lord! Give us Thy bounties in this world!
But they will have no portion in the Hereafter.
And there are men who say:
Our Lord! Give us good in this world and good in the Hereafter,
And defend us from the torment of the Fire![27]

Regarding life and world, the idea and viewpoint of both happens to be fundamentally different from each other's. One says:

O my people!
This life of the present is nothing but [temporary] convenience;
it is the Hereafter that is the Home that will last.[28]

The other says:

There is nothing but our life in this world! We shall die and we live!
But we shall never be raised up again![29]

With belief in the Hereafter cannot co-exist arrogance, passion for personal rise, and the urge to create mischief, disturbance and destruction in the land. These aims and dispositions do not have any compatibility with the disposition of this tenet. Allah the Exalted has clearly said:

That House of the Hereafter We shall give to those

26. V.169, chapter 7, *Al A'raaf*, **27.** V.200-201, chapter 2, *Al Baqrah*, **28.** V.39, chapter 40, *Al Mu'min*. **29.** V.37, C.23, *Al Mu'minoon*. The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Y. Ali.

**who intend not high-handedness or mischief on earth:
and the End is [best] for the righteous.**[30]

For this very reason, in the life of one who believes in the Hereafter, there does not develop the sentiment of attaining personal eminence; even in the condition when he rules and is in authority, his habit of servitude and supplicating does not go away, instead, as much he rises in stature so much more his head bows in humility; when he gets power and wealth, at that time, he does not burst out like the one who refuses to believe in the Hereafter [Qaroon] saying:

'This has been given to me because of a certain knowledge [I have]!'[31]

Rather, like a pious slave of God, who believes in the Hereafter [*Sayyadna* Sulaiman, peace be upon him] he says:

**This is by the grace of my Lord! –
to test me whether I am grateful or ungrateful!**[32]

Upon seeing the lavishness of his spending and the extensiveness of his dominion, he does not, like a God-ignoring king [Pharaoh], exclaim:

**Does not the dominion of Egypt belong to me,
[witness] these streams flowing underneath my [palace]?**[33]

And does not like the strong 'Aad, the people of Prophet Hud, peace be upon him, say arrogantly:

Who is superior to us in strength?[34]

Rather, like a prophet-king his heart is filled to the brim with hymn, and his voice turns melodious with thanks, and he says uncontrollably:

**O my Lord!
So order me that I may be grateful for Thy favors**

30. V.83, C.28, *Al Qasas*, **31.** V.49, C.39, *Az Zumar.* **32.** V.40, C.27, *An Naml.* **33.** V. 51, C.43, *Az Zukhruf*. **34.** V.15.C41, *Fussilat*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

which Thou hast bestowed upon me and on my parents,
and that I may work the righteousness that will please Thee.
And admit me, by Thy Grace to the ranks of Thy righteous servants.[35]

He does not become satisfied and content with that earthly rule, he knows that the real honor is the honor of the Hereafter, and actual wealth is the wealth of true slavery to God, therefore together with expressing thanks to God for His favors, the last thing that he desires is that he be raised from this world a true and obedient servant, and be included among the pious slaves of God. *Sayyadna* Yusuf, peace be upon him, says:

O my Lord!
Thou has indeed bestowed on me some power,
and taught me something of the interpretation
of dreams and events –
O Thou Creator of the heavens and the earth!
Thou art my Protector in this world and in the Hereafter.
Take Thou my soul [at death] as one submitting to Thy Will [as a Muslim],
and unite me with the righteous.[36]

A believer in the Hereafter fears the Hereafter and the disgrace of the Plain of Resurrection more than the disgrace of the world. He always shudders to imagine it. Thus supplicates *Sayyadna* Ibrahim, peace be upon him:

And let me not be in disgrace on the day when [men] will be raised up.
The day whereon neither wealth nor sons will avail.
But only he [will prosper] that brings to Allah a sound heart.[37]

35. V.19, chapter 27, *An Naml*, **36.** V.101, chapter 12, *Yusuf*, **37.** V.87-89, chapter 26, *Ash-Sho'ara*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

Thus supplicates the believer . . .

Our Lord!
Any whom Thou dost admit to the Fire,
truly Thou coverest with shame,
and never will wrongdoers find any helpers!

Our Lord
we have heard the call of one calling [us] to faith,
'Believe ye in the Lord' and we have believed;
our Lord
forgive us our sins,
blot out from us our inequities,
and take to Thyself our souls in the company of the righteous.

Our Lord!
Grant us what Thou didst promise unto us through Thy messengers,
and save us from shame on the Day of Judgment;
for Thou never breakest Thy promise.[38]

It is the result of this very reality, that over the eternal torment of the Hereafter and the insult and disgrace of the Day of Judgment, he gives preference to the severest of the severe suffering and pain, and greatest of the great disgrace and ignominy of the world, not only he tolerates it out of that dread, instead, sometimes, invites it himself by exposing his sin.

During the time of the beloved prophet *Sayyadna* Muhammad ﷺ, a Muslim man, Ma'ez and a Muslim woman, Ghamdiyah, exposed their fault again and again, and expressed their wish that by sentencing them to punishment in the world they be saved from the stigmatization of the Hereafter and the

38. V.192-194, chapter 3, *Aal-i-Imran*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

torment of the Hell Fire. The beloved prophet ﷺ, overlooked it. However, they appeared before him ﷺ again and again and they made a request for that sentence. The incident is as follows:

> Abdullah bin Boraidah reports on the authority of his father that one day Ma'ez bin Malik Aslami appeared in the exalted presence of the apostle of Allah ﷺ, and submitted, that O Apostle of Allah [ﷺ] I have wronged myself immensely, in other words I have happened to commit the sin of fornication, therefore by punishing me according to the ordinance in Divine Law I be purified. That day the beloved prophet ﷺ, turned him back. The next day he was in attendance again and made the same petition, that O Apostle of Allah [ﷺ] I have committed fornication, that second time also he ﷺ, turned him back and after summoning his family members asked, 'Do you know something, is it that some derangement and abnormality has crept in the mind of Ma'ez?' They said, 'So far as we know, as regards intellect and understanding we consider him to be very much among the fit people of our tribe'. Ma'ez appeared in the exalted presence for the third time, the prophet ﷺ, sent him to the people of his tribe and again enquired about him. They simply said that, 'In our opinion he has no illness and in his mind is no unsoundness'. Then when he appeared for the fourth time, at that time, a pit was dug out for him and by the order of the prophet ﷺ, he was stoned to death. After that Ghamdiyah [the woman] arrived and she said, 'O Apostle of Allah! I have become guilty of fornication, therefore by punishing me according to the ordinance in Divine Law, get me purified of this sin. The beloved prophet ﷺ, turned her back. The next day she came again and submitted, O Apostle of Allah [ﷺ] why did you turn me back, perhaps you turned me back [on grounds of doubt and suspicion] the way you had asked Ma'ez to go back. So by God, I have conceived also. The Apostle of Allah ﷺ said, 'When this is the matter, then in that case the sentence cannot be carried out at this time, therefore go back now until your child is born'. The narrator says that, time came that she delivered then brought that child wrapped in a cloth and said, 'This is the child who is born of me [therefore now get me punished according to the ordinance in Divine Law]', the beloved prophet ﷺ said, 'No! Go and feed him until he begins to eat

bread portions'. Then when the child stopped feeding on milk, and he began to take some solid foods, then she reappeared holding him in her arms – and he had a bread portion in his hand – and submitted, 'O Apostle of Allah [ﷺ]! I have made him leave milk and he has started eating meals [therefore now get me punished according to the penal ordinance in Divine Law].' At last, the beloved prophet ﷺ, took the little boy and gave it in the custody of one of the Muslims. Then by the order of the prophet ﷺ, a pit was dug out that measured from her feet to chest [in which she was buried chest deep] and people stoned her to death. Among those who performed the stoning was Khalid bin Waleed also, he picked up a stone, hit it on her head, droplets from the stream of blood that it let out flew up to Khalid's face, he said something insulting for her which the apostle of Allah ﷺ overheard, so he ﷺ said to Khalid, 'Do not utter any bad word for her. By the Being of the Truth [Allah] in whose Hand is my soul! She has offered such a repentance, that even if some despot who extracts a non-permissible tax offered such a repentance, Forgiveness would be granted to him'. Then by the order of the prophet ﷺ her funeral prayer was conducted and she was buried.

From the point of view of a person who is purely worldly and refuses to believe in the Hereafter this act is through and through folly and madness: a man reveals his hidden and concealed fault and needlessly puts his body into torment! However, from the point of view of a believer there cannot be an act any wiser than to tolerate worldly torment, as opposed to the torment of the Hereafter, because in his opinion, the torment of the Hereafter is more severe, more disgracing, more rigorous, and lasts over a longer period of time.

The penalty of the Hereafter is
far more grievous, and more enduring.[39]

The penalty of the Hereafter
will be more humiliating still:[40]

39. V.127, chapter 20, *Taha*, **40.** V.16, chapter 41, *Ha Meem Sajdah*; The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

But harder, truly, is the penalty of the Hereafter: and defender have they none against Allah.[41]

Again the result of this belief is that, man, both in public and private, remains equally law abiding, cautious and devoted to God, and where there is nobody to oversee him and ask for an explanation from him, even there he does not indulge in any act of dishonesty and misconduct.

During the Victory of Mada'en, people picked up a carpet in the spoils of war, that belonged to Iranian kings, was worth hundreds of thousands of Rupees, and safely transported it to the army commander; similarly a common foot-soldier got hold of the gilded crown of King Khusro, he also handed it over to the commander. When *Sayyadna* S'ad, may Allah be pleased with him, sent these goods to *Sayyadna* Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, and the latter saw it among the spoils, his impromptu remark was: 'People who did not touch these expensive things and whose intentions did not change, certainly they are very pious people'.

A psychological effect of belief in, and conviction about, the Hereafter is that there develops a tremendous strength in man to endure the troubles of the world and the failures and unpalatable incidents of life, which is not present in the one who refuses to believe in the Hereafter.

He has the firm conviction, that the present one is not the only life, instead after this is a second life which is eternal and everlasting, and which is not subordinate to the laws and conditions of this life. Therefore, if he is a believer and keeps to righteous deeds, then he is certain that he will be requited there for all his troubles, this fleeting life will pass somehow or the other, afterwards not even its recollection will be left over there[42]. Moreover, belief in the Hereafter, the fondness to see God and the longing for the Garden of Paradise, create in man such a sentiment of sacrifice,

41. V.34, chapter 13, *Ar-R'ad*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali. **42.** It is for this reason that the ratio of incidents of suicide in the Islamic countries, as opposed to Western countries, is to the extent of cipher, and so many incidents too occur in those places where Western education and civilization, materialism and excessive love or greed of the world have cultivated a refusal to believe in the Hereafter or have totally blurred the idea of the Hereafter.

rather selflessness, and overtake him with such drunkenness which is not possible through other courses of action, intoxicants, the rhyme and rhythm of battle-cries and other means. A believer considers his life to be an already sold merchandise, whose payment he will receive in the form of Paradise.

Allah hath purchased of the believers their persons and their goods; for theirs [in return] is the Garden of Paradise: they fight in His cause, and slay and are slain:[43]

This is the very article of faith that created in Muslims such restlessness to lay down their life and such devotion to Islam, whose precedent is not found anywhere. It is reported in Sahih Muslim that, while enemy soldiers were close by, *Sayyadna* Abu Musa Ash-She'ri, may Allah be pleased with him, recounted the words of the Apostle of Allah ﷺ, that, 'The gates of the Heaven are beneath the shade of swords'. A man who was in miserable condition, was wearing old worn-out clothes, stood up and he said, 'O Abu Musa! Did you hear [that] from the apostle of Allah ﷺ?' He said, 'Yes!' He went back to his companions and said, 'Accept my salutations, I take your leave', then broke the sheath of his sword and threw it on the ground, and sword in hand penetrated amidst the enemy and laid down his life in the way of God.

Once the beloved prophet ﷺ said: Rise! Rush towards that Heaven in whose width are the earth and the skies.[44] 'Umair bin Hamam Ansari, may Allah be pleased with him, said, 'O Apostle of Allah[ﷺ], such a Heaven whose width is the sky and the earth or in whose width will disappear the earth and the sky?' He ﷺ said, 'Yes!' He said, 'Oho'. The apostle of Allah ﷺ said, 'Why do you say this?' He said, 'O Allah's prophet [ﷺ]! . . . said it only in the hope that perhaps I too may be one of the people of that Heaven.' He ﷺ said, 'You are among them!' He began to take out and eat dates from his haversack, then said that, 'If I remain alive until eating these dates then this is but too long a life.' Then, he threw away the dates and started fighting, so much so that, he was martyred.

Sayyadna Jabir, may Allah be pleased with him, says that in the Battle of

43. Verse 111, Chapter 9, *At-Tawbah*, The Meaning of Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali. **44.** Sahih Muslim.

Uhud, Anas bin Nadar, may Allah be pleased with him, upon seeing *Sayyadna* S'ad bin M'aaz, may Allah be pleased with him, said to him, 'By the God of Nadar, I am smelling the fragrance of Heaven from the direction of the mountains of Uhud. When he was martyred, at that time, his body had bore a little over eighty wounds. He could not even be recognized because his body was full of wounds of sword, of spear and of arrows, but his sister identified him only by a finger which might be having some distinguishing sign.



Characteristics of the refusal to believe in the Hereafter

The first and natural effect of the refusal to believe in the Hereafter, is that there develops an abnormal appetite and craze of profiting, benefiting, consuming and deriving pleasure from worldly things and worldly life, and this very thing is by and large considered the purpose of life. Whichever class or society holds this belief, time and time again from every corner of it is raised the call for carousing and the slogan of *a luxurious way of life*, and its entire life is a display of this race, and, in fact, after the refusal to believe in the Hereafter this craze is wisdom in precise. One who is devoid of the idea of some other life after this life, why is he to reduce his enjoyment in this life and the satisfaction of his burning desires, and postpone to which day his luxury and tastes? For this very reason the Quran says, **While those who reject Allah will enjoy [this world] and eat as cattle eat; and the Fire will be their abode.**[45] You leave those people on their own, let them eat and enjoy to their full and let their imaginary plans keep them involved in negligence; then soon they will come to know the truth.

To these very persons will be said on the Day of Resurrection:

Ye received your good things in the life of the world, and ye took your pleasure out of them: but today shall ye be recompensed with a Penalty of humiliation: for that ye were arrogant on earth without just cause,[46]

The natural consequence of refusal to believe in the Hereafter is that, this world, its goods, professions employable in it, become more flashy and attractive, mentality becomes materialistic and vision becomes superficial which is incapable of reaching up to the realities.

45. V.12, C.47, *Muhammad*. **46.** V.20, C.46, *Al Ahqaf*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; A Y Ali.

As to those who believe not in the Hereafter, We have made their deeds pleasing in their eyes; and so they wander about in distraction.[47]

Say: Shall we tell you of those who lose most in respect of their deeds? Those whose efforts have been wasted in this life, while they thought that they were acquiring good by their works? They are those who deny the signs of their Lord and the fact of their having to meet Him [in the Hereafter]: vain will be their works. Nor shall We on the Day of Judgment, give them any weight. That is their reward, Hell; because they rejected faith, and took My signs and My messengers by way of jest. As to those who believe and work righteous deeds, they have, for their entertainment, the Gardens of Paradise. Wherein they shall dwell [for aye]: no change will they wish for themselves.[48]

One consequence of this also happens to be, that the portion of truth and seriousness in life happens to be less and the portion of fun and amusement, more. A large part of their life is surrounded by activities and pastimes of entertainments, addictions and delight; and even in highly critical times and great dangers there does not come about any change in their enjoyment of this entertaining preoccupation.

Leave alone those who take their religion to be mere play and amusement and are deceived by the life of this world.[49]

One outcome is also that their eye misses the real reasons and causes of misfortunes and events, rather it gets entangled in a few apparent things and does not get past them. They cannot get to the depth of affairs and cannot explore anything beneath the superficial, as a result of which, their negligence and diverting fixation do not lessen at the time of their very destruction also. They theorize some interpretation of those events and become satisfied after searching a hypothetical or unreal reason for it, and no revolutionary change comes about in their behavior.

47. Verse 4, chapter 27, *An Naml*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali. **48.** Verse 103-108, chapter 18, *Al Kahaf*. The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali. **49.** Verse 70, chapter 6, *Al An'am*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

The verse bears witness:

When the suffering reached them from Us, why then did they not learn humility? On the contrary their hearts became hardened, and Satan made their acts seem alluring to them.[50]

A moral repercussion of refusal to believe in the Hereafter is that there remains no stimulant to perform moral acts and there never is created a preparedness in man for those acts and conducts in which either no worldly gain and expediency is seen or a man is not compelled to perform them.

Seest thou one who denies the Judgment [to come]?
Then such is the man who repulses the orphan [with harshness]
And encourages not the feeding of the indigent.[51]

And even if they do such moral deeds, they are merely for show:

And those who expend of their substance for show of men, and believe not in Allah nor in the Last Day; and whosoever hath for him Satan as a companion, a vile companion hath he![52]

Like those who spend their substance to be seen of men, but neither believe in Allah nor in the last Day.[53]

One characteristic of the refusal to believe in the Hereafter is arrogance. Nothing hampers the one who refuses to believe in the Hereafter from being arrogant. One who does not believe in any Supreme Power above him, the Court of an all-knowing and all-seeing Ruler, any life after this life, and the Day of Recompense, what can obstruct him from becoming a camel without a rider and a rebellious human being; to some extent man-made laws, expediencies and impediments will act as hurdles in his path but when those impediments will be removed or where he will be able to overcome those impediments, he will rise there in the mold of a Pharaoh also. For this very reason, in the Glorious Quran arrogance is often mentioned with the refusal

50. V.43, C.6, *Al An'aam*. **51.** V.1-3, C.107, *Ma'oon*. The Holy Quran; A. Y. Ali. **52.** V.38, C.4, *An Nisaa'*, the Holy Quran; Translation: A.M. Daryabadi. **53.** V.264, C.2, *Al Baqrah*. The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

to believe in the Hereafter; it is as if the relation between the two is like that of two inseparable things or like cause and effect.

As to those who believe not in the Hereafter,
their hearts refuse to know, and they are arrogant.[54]

About Pharaoh and his army it was said: **And he was arrogant and insolent in the land, beyond reason – he and his hosts: they thought that they would not have to return to Us!**[55]

In that quote of *Sayyadna* Musa, peace be upon him, that has been cited in the Glorious Quran an indication has been made towards this matter:

Moses said: 'I have indeed called upon my Lord and your Lord
[for protection] from every arrogant one
who believes not in the Day of Account!'[56]

He who refuses to believe in the Hereafter, usually remains entangled in a spiritual torment and personal vexation in this world also. Among such people, those who have not become insensitive and their conscience is not dead, a prick that keeps troubling them, in every condition, is that life in any case is limited. However long the life, no matter how much the goods and chattels of merriment and happy social life, death is a certainty, and one will surely have to vacate this garden of luxury, and will inevitably have to leave behind this liveliness and happy social life. This prick of the heart and this nagging anxiety keeps them restless and spoils the happiness of their life. They feel very despondent and despaired in the world and really who can be more despondent than them.

Munhasir marne pe ho jiski umeed
naumeedee uskee dekha chahiye

The one whose hope is pinned on death
Behold the hopelessness of such a one!

54. V.22, chapter 16, *An Nahl*. **55.** V.39, chapter 28, *Qasas*. **56.** V.27, chapter 40, *Mo'min*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

For this reason many people among them keep shielding their heart from the thought of death and do not, by any means, let its thought cross their heart. They feel horrified to even discuss death and a few make all efforts that they do not, by any means, remember this unpleasant reality. For this reason, such people use intoxicants and drugs so that they always remain besides themselves and overtaken by self neglect.

Mae se gharaz nishat hai kis roo siyah ko
ek goona bekhudi mujhe din raat chahiye

Who the sinful desires delight from a drink?
A constant oblivion I need, all day, all night.

Then such becomes their condition that all their lives they never think of these bitter realities. And such becomes their plight:

Sada khwab-e-ghaflat mein madhosh rahna
dam-e-marg tak . . . . khud-faraamosh rahna

Forever be drunk in the negligence dream
Remain self-oblivious till near-death time

Their eyes open when they are about to close forever.

Lost indeed are they who treat it as a falsehood that they must meet Allah – until on a sudden the hour is on them, and they say: 'Ah! Woe unto us that we took no thought of it.' For they bear their burdens on their backs, and evil indeed are the burdens that they bear.[57]

What is the life of this world but amusement and play?
But verily the Home in the Hereafter
– that is life indeed, if they but knew.[58]

57. V. 31, chapter 6, *Al An'aam*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali. **58.** V.64, chapter 29, *Al 'Ankaboot*, The meaning of the Holy Quran; Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

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[Non English terms are italicized]

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Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, born in 1914, one of the leading Muslim scholars of the twentieth century hailed from a family which has produced many illustrious figures and intellectuals. He was Secretary, Nadwatul Ulema, Lucknow; Chairman, Managing Committee, Darul Musannifeen (Shibli Academy), Azamgarh; Member, Academy of Arts and Letters, Damascus, and the Higher Council of the Islamic University, Madinah; Member of the Executive Committee of the Federation of Islamic Universities, Rabat, and of the Academy of Arabic Languages, Oman; a founder member of the Constituent Council of the Muslim World League, Makkah, and Chairman of the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies in Oxford University, U.K. He was awarded the King Faisal Award for his services to the cause of Islam in 1980. He passed away in 1999.

As a writer and orator of great merit he expressed himself in Urdu and Arabic; his highly authoritative works in both these languages are numerous; many have been translated in Persian, French, Turkish, Indonesian and English. Among the English translations of his works are – Islam and the World; Western Civilization; Islam and Muslims; Four Pillars of Islam; Saviors of Islamic Spirit; Glory of Iqbal; Stories of the Prophets; MUHAMMAD, the Last Prophet; Economic Order in Islam; and A Short Presentation on Islam.

THE FUNDAMENTAL TRIO OF ARTICLES OF FAITH IN ISLAM, BELIEF IN THE ONENESS OF GOD, THE APOSTLESHIP, THE HEREAFTER too is a work of translation. It is a universally relevant writing on religion that focuses on revealed knowledge imparted to humanity by prophets and apostles, peace be upon them. The book mainly covers the Being and Attributes of God and the nature and purpose of human life. Both subjects lie outside the purview of acquired knowledge.